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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

As, sir, you wish to gratify your readers with some useful and authentic information respecting the Ethiopic Christians, and seem to invite such communications, I here transmit to you what I have collected from various books; being part of a work I may hereafter publish, under the title of *Ecclesiastical Collections, chiefly Oriental, &c.* T. Y.

Abassinia is a vast and extensive country, situated on the eastern confines of Africa, where it is bounded by the shore of the Red Sea towards the Straits of Babelmandel. Its extent is computed at a million of square miles. It contains several principalities, subject to the same sovereign, of which one, called Tigri, formerly the seat of the Ethiopian kings, comprehends twenty-four provinces: these principalities are, in reality, so many petty kingdoms. Abassinia, distinguishes Christian from Pagan Ethiopia; which last is considerably more extensive, and comprehends a number of nations.

Gondar, or, as it is called, *Gondar a Catma*; i. e. the City of the Seal; is the capital of the empire, and the chief residence of the Emperor, and of the *Abuna*, or Patriarch, who has a handsome palace contiguous to the patriarchal church. The city is three leagues in circumference, and contains a hundred Christian churches.

Emfras, next to Gondar, from which it is distant a day's journey, is one of the most considerable cities of Abassinia, and the only one

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where the Mahometans are allowed the public exercise of their religion, and where their houses are intermixed with those of the Christians.

The population and strength of the empire may be inferred from the numerous armies they can raise in a short time, and at a small expense. They wage war with the pagans annually, for the security of their own dominions, and to prevent the growing power of their enemies, especially the kings of Galla and Changalla. Their armies are very large: one commanded by the Emperor in 1699, or 1700, consisted of between four and five hundred thousand men.

In Europe, says my author, we have long been in an error about the colour of the Ethiopians; because we have confounded them with the Blacks of Nubia, who are their neighbours. Their natural colour is brown, or rather that of the olive; their stature is tall and majestic; they have good complexions, beautiful eyes, well-set noses, thick lips, and white teeth: whereas the inhabitants of Nubia, or Sennar, have flat noses, thick lips, and very black complexions.

The language of the country is a dialect of the Arabic, called by some the *Amharic* tongue, and is probably no more than a corruption of the ancient Ethiopic, formerly spoken in the kingdom of Tigri. The Ethiopic is their learned language; and herein all their ancient writings are extant, and all books of prime note in the religion and laws of the empire continue to be written, because they esteem it a noble tongue.

They pretend to have derived it from Chaldea, and therefore call it also *Chaldee*. It is in this language that the holy Scriptures are written and read in their churches, as also their liturgies and other church books.

The sovereign of Abassinia is a Christian prince; and from the extent of his dominions, and the multitude of his subjects, he claims the title of Emperor. It is by virtue of his profession of the Christian faith that he holds the empire, and bears the imperial titles. His motto is, "*Jesus, Emperor of Ethiopia, of the Tribe of Judah, victorious;*" and this is the seal of the empire, displayed by a lion holding a cross, which are his arms. His titles of embassy to foreign princes announce his descent, religion, and government, in the usual forms of Oriental magnificence, of which we have a specimen in letters of embassy sent to Pope Clement VII., and Don Emanuel, King of Portugal, as follows: "David the Beloved of God, Pillar of the Faith, of the blood and line of Judah, Son of David, Son of Solomon, Son of the Pillar of Sion, Son of the Seed of Jacob, Son of the Hand of Mary, Son of Nahu after the flesh, Emperor of the Great Ethiopia, and of all the kingdoms and countries thereon depending, &c. &c." It may be observed, that formerly, not only Abassinia, but all Ethiopia, was subject to the Emperor; but these domains, having fallen into paganism, were lost to the empire; nevertheless, the title of sovereignty is claimed by all that succeed to the throne of Abassinia.

Next to the Emperor is the Abuna, i. e. *our Father*, who is the patriarch, and sole bishop of all Abassinia: he ordains all priests and deacons, appoints them to benefices, nominates the superiors of monasteries, and has an absolute power over the monks, who are there very numerous; he is the only bishop of the Ethiopic church, but is himself subject to the patriarch of Alexandria in Egypt, by whom he is consecrated and invested with the powers and

title of his office. The Abuna is nominated by the Emperor, who is supreme in all ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs.

We may judge of the greatness of the ecclesiastical establishment from this, that, at one ordination, the Abuna is said sometimes to ordain ten thousand priests and five or six thousand deacons. The whole ceremony of the ordination consists in this: the Abuna, sitting down, repeats the beginning of the Gospel over the heads of such as are made priests, and gives them his benediction with an iron cross, which he holds in his hand, weighing seven or eight pounds;—but as for the deacons, he gives them his benediction without reciting the Gospel.

The Ethiopic church is entitled to the veneration due to every Christian church of early foundation. It is a tradition among the Abassinians, that their empire became Christian in the days of their celebrated Queen Candace, who was converted by the Eunuch baptized by Philip the deacon, as it is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. But however this may be, the constitution of their church, and the purity of its doctrine, bear evident signs of an early original; and though it may not have been of apostolic foundation, yet it probably was planted not later than the expiration of the apostolic age. Rufinus writes, that their conversion was brought about by the instrumentality of one Frumentius, in the fourth century; but this seems a far less probable statement; and could I enter into the subject, ample testimony might be produced in favour of an earlier date.

The Ethiopic Christians acknowledge the holy Scriptures to be the only rule of faith and practice. They worship one God in Trinity. They believe in the incarnation of the Son of God; and that Christ is perfect God and perfect man. They own the merits of Jesus Christ to be sufficient for eternal salvation. They celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and administer the latter in both kinds to

clergy and laity, conformably to the custom of all the eastern churches. Finally, they use the Nicene Creed in their liturgy, which comprises the fundamental articles of the Christian faith.

As to forms and ceremonies in worship, wherein all churches differ more or less, as well in the east as west; in these the Ethiopian Christians have prescribed for themselves, as other churches have done, though perhaps with less deviation from the principles of Christianity than is to be found in some of the western churches.

Circumcision is with them a national custom, and not a religious rite: they circumcise their children, both male and female, eight days after the birth; but this is not done out of a compliance either with the Jewish law, or with the practice of the ancient Judaizing Christians: they assign other reasons for it.

They baptise their male children at forty days old, and females on the eightieth day after the birth, except in cases where there is danger of death. The children, it is said, are not immersed in the water at baptism, but only dipped, or sprinkled.

Adult baptism is performed in the following manner:—The priest begins with reciting psalm LI., and then perfumes the person with incense, and asks his name; certain other prayers are then recited, and several parts of the body are anointed with holy oil; the priest then lays his hand upon the head of the person, while he renounces the devil and his works, makes his vow to Christ, and rehearses the creed; after which he is again anointed with oil. The remainder of the consecrated oil is then poured into the baptismal water, when the priest descends into the pool; and the new convert, being conducted thither by the deacons, is plunged thrice under water by the priest, who uses the form of words, “I baptise thee,” &c., taken from Matt. ch. xxviii. 19. After baptism he is assisted by the deacons,

who lead him out of the pool, and put on him a white under garment, to signify purity of soul, and over it a red vest, in token of his salvation purchased by the blood of Christ; and being thus initiated into the church of the faithful, he partakes of the holy communion. At his dismissal he is presented with milk and honey; and the priest, laying his hand upon his head, gives him his benediction; “Son of baptism, go in peace.”

The holy sacrament is administered in both kinds, and is received standing both by priests and people. The officiating priest administers the bread, and the deacon the wine in a spoon. The bread is leavened, except on certain days of humiliation and fasting, when they use unleavened bread; and the wine is prepared from the stones of raisins.

They observe Saturday, in remembrance of the Creation, and solemnly keep the Christian Sabbath, or Lord's-day. Their public worship, which they attend once on that day, continues for several hours, when they observe the usual services proper for its solemnization, prayer, reading the Scriptures, singing, and exhortation, or delivering a discourse or homily. In some of their churches they have music, to which they sing; but their instruments and psalmody are not agreeable to an European ear. What is singular among them is the practice of sacred dances, to the sound of cymbals and kettle-drums, which, they say, is in imitation of David: they call it rejoicing before the Lord. It may be presumed, that this practice is observed more particularly on festivals. Their fasts are many, and they keep them with great strictness.

It is not lawful to communicate in private, or any where else but in the church, with an exception only in favour of the Emperor, when he receives the communion in his royal chapel. This office completes their divine service at all times, being administered every Sunday in every church, after the custom of the primitive Christians.

Their churches are built in the usual form of those in the East, and in imitation of the Temple of Jerusalem; having a sanctuary and an outer court. In the sanctuary stands the holy table, set on four pillars; upon which is placed the *tabot*, or chest with the utensils for the consecrated elements; and over this is a canopy.

The outer court, or body of the church, resembles that of the cathedral churches amongst us, and consists of a spacious pavement, on which stand the pillars that support the superstructure, or roof, and which is without pews or seats. Age and infirmity compel many to lean where they can for rest; and as their service continues for several hours, and no sitting is allowed, most churches accommodate the weak with a sort of crutches fixed for the purpose, which is also the practice among the modern Greeks.

As to the *tabot*, or holy chest, it is thought to be in imitation of those used by the Christians in the ages of martyrdom, when, being forced to meet in caves and burying-places in the night, for fear of their persecutors, they carried the sacred elements and utensils in chests made like a coffin, the better to escape the notice of their cruel enemies, and secure a peaceful celebration. In after times, these chests were brought into the churches, and by degrees were made to resemble a table: but the Ethiopian Christians alone seem to retain it in the ancient manner, having both table and chest, though the latter is made in a tabular form. In other churches, especially in the West, the table is the altar, without a chest.

These Christians have so great a veneration for their churches, as the temples of God, that, in riding by them, they alight from their mules and walk a space, and then remount. When they enter, they put off their shoes at the door; and never spit upon the pavement, or commit other indecencies in or about the house of worship.

It is observed they have pictures in their churches, but do not allow of any statues; and though they have crosses, they will not suffer crucifixes to be used: it is counted a heinous offence among them to carry even a picture of Christ crucified.

Monks and monasteries abound in Abassinia. The monks labour hard in the fields and gardens; fast daily till three in the afternoon; and assemble for devotion at midnight, and other stated hours: they are subject to priors and superiors, who are all appointed by the Abuna. Their monasteries are more like villages than the Roman convents; and as the country is fertile, and land is plenty, their labours procure them an easy support. The most celebrated of their monasteries is that of *Atletujah*, which formerly had four thousand monks. The monkish life is purely voluntary, and they are allowed to decline it whenever they please. Some of them are schoolmasters and tutors; and others, of superior ability, are preferred to civil offices, and become principals and governors of provinces. The Ethiopic clergy, like the Greek, are allowed to marry once; but on a second marriage they are degraded. Marriage is forbidden the monks; nor can their children be admitted to the priesthood: so that if they are inclined to marry, they must quit the order of monachism.

With respect to learning among the Ethiopians, little can be said. They are, it seems, ignorant of other languages; and this, with the nature and situation of their country, shuts them out from a free intercourse with learned and commercial nations. They possess few books, except such as concern the religion and laws of their country; and these being of ancient compilation, and written in their ancient language, the Ethiopic, the reading and understanding of them is esteemed a considerable acquirement. It is said, however, that some Jesuits discovered, in one of their churches, a

library, well stored with books in most languages ; and, for ought we know, learning might, at some former period, have flourished in this country, though at present both priests and people are sunk in extreme ignorance.

Their version of the holy Scriptures is valuable on account of its antiquity. Chrysostome, in his second Homily upon Job, attests, that in his time the Ethiopians had a translation of the Bible. This translation is little known in Europe ; and the Latin version, published in the Polyglott, is very incorrect. The Ethiopic New Testament, printed in the time of Paul the Third, at Rome, 1549, is faulty, in consequence of some illegible parts in the MS. having been supplied, by the editors, from the text of the Vulgate. It would be important to investigate the genuine text of the Ethiopic version ; but few in Europe know any thing of the language.

Besides the holy Scriptures, the Ethiopic church is possessed of several ancient and valuable church books. They have a volume called *Synodum* or the book of Synods, containing what they call the *Apostolical Constitutions*, which are found to differ much from those known in Europe. This book they divide into eight parts ; and it is held in such veneration among them, that it is sometimes bound up with the New Testament.* They have the decrees and acts of some of the most celebrated councils, down to the Council of Chalcedon ; the Acts of the Nicene Fathers ; Liturgies ; Lives of Saints ; Martyrologies, &c. It were much to be wished that copies of them were brought into Europe, as they

* It is not improbable that this book of Apostolical Constitutions is the same with the eight books of Clements extant with the Syrian Christians ; fragments of which books, bound up at the end of the large Syriac Bible lately brought from India by Dr. Buchanan, shews that they were much esteemed and used in the Syrian church, and were probably translated from the Syriac into the Ethiopic tongue.

might furnish some valuable materials for ecclesiastical history.

The Ethiopians seem far from averse to learning : the Jesuits found a ready acceptance among them at first. These Roman missionaries were gratefully invited to instruct the Ethiopian youth, and lands were assigned them, with many honours, for their labours ; but no sooner did these men arrive at power and consequence, than they pursued measures which at length ended in their banishment from the empire.*

The first of the Jesuit missionaries that entered the country, was F. Corvillon, a Portuguese, in the year 1491 ; since which period several expensive missions and embassies were sent by the Roman Catholic powers, to effect, if possible, the subjugation of the Ethiopian church to the see of Rome ; and considerable attention was paid to them on the part of the Emperor and Patriarch ; but the designing views of the Jesuit missionaries, and the tyranny exercised by them, at length rendered them odious and detestable.

Whoever reads the violent proceedings of the Jesuit missionaries in Abassinia, and the confusion, discord, and bloodshed which they caused, will not wonder that it should have been made death for a papist to enter the country : and this irreconcilable hatred appears to have continued to a period long subsequent to their expulsion, as appears from a letter, dated Madrid, June 30, 1720 :—" We have received an account that Father Lamberat Vaiz, a German, Michael Pio de Cervo, and Samuel de Biuno, natives of the Milanese, monks of the order of St Francis, who, after having escaped many perils, were arrived in Ethiopia, with a design to convert to the Roman Catholic faith the natives of that country, had reached Gondar, where they were carried before the king the metropolitan, and chief men both of the clergy and state, by whom they were

* See Christ. Observ. for April, p. 197.

sentenced to die, unless they abjured the Council of Chalcedon; which, with the utmost constancy, they refused to do; whereupon they were delivered up to the fury of the people, who stoned them to death: the metropolitan having threatened to excommunicate any one who should cast less than seven stones at them."

The Roman Catholics are obnoxious to the Ethiopians on account both of their intolerant usurpation in spiritual matters, which led them to insist on an entire change of the ancient discipline and constitution, of the Abassinian Church; and of their restless and tyrannical disposition in matters relating to civil government, in order to increase and establish their own power. But the same causes of offence would not exist in the case of the Protestant and reformed churches; so that we might hope that the Ethiopians would accept their christian services in love and unity.

Respecting the decree of the Council of Chalcedon, to which the Ethiopic Christians so strenuously object, and for which the unity between them and the Greek church was dissolved by an entire separation, I shall only observe, that, by all I can learn, the subject of that decree was no more in reality than a strife about words, which each party understood in their own way, and chose to express in their own terms; the decision of the Greeks and Latins, concerning the two natures in Christ, being rejected by the Ethiopic Church as novel and innovatory. The subtle and metaphysical terms and distinctions applied by the Greeks and Latins to that sublime mystery, the Ethiopians did not, perhaps, well understand in their language, and they refused to adopt them: nevertheless they acknowledged the truth which was intended to be expressed by the decree of Chalcedon, as appears from their uniform use of the Nicene Creed, in common with all orthodox churches.

The reformation of the Ethiopic

church to the pure and primitive doctrine that formerly flourished amongst them, would be a most desirable object. They have the holy Scriptures; they have a pure Confession; and retain the doctrine and discipline of their ancient church with as much integrity, and as little innovation, as could be expected, secluded as they are, and have been for ages, from intercourse with other Christian nations, and surrounded by Pagans and Mahometans. The bare existence of a Christian church at this time in Abassinia may be regarded as a miracle!

FAMILY SERMONS. No. XLVI.

Ephes. vi. 18.—*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance.*

If there be any one circumstance which peculiarly distinguishes a sound Christian, it appears to be, that he lives in the spirit and in the practice of prayer. It is this which makes the great difference between him and the world. It is a duty by which the faith, hope, and love, of a believer is sustained; temptation avoided or resisted; corrupt desire weakened and overcome: and it is an employment which will never cease, till it be finally swallowed up in everlasting praise.

On the present occasion, it will be my endeavour to explain the particulars concerning this important duty which are contained in the text; and I would observe,

I. That prayer is a duty to be performed at all times. St. Paul says, "praying always." Yet this cannot mean, that every moment of life must be spent on our knees; since this is utterly impossible. But it certainly signifies, that when the proper seasons of devotion return, they must not be suffered to pass away without the duty of the hour being conscientiously performed. The first season is, when we rise in the morning to the light, and to the

occupations of another day. If we enter on our worldly business without fulfilling this early duty, we are unfit for the duties, the trials, or even the enjoyments, of the day. We may indeed execute our usual work, and, as far as worldly advantage is concerned, may forward it with despatch and success; but still we are active merely as one who looks no farther than this life; caring, indeed, for the passing day, but in the bustle of this world forgetting the prospects of eternity. Should any trial derange our projects, it entangles us as a snare: we went out in the morning with an unprepared, unready mind. And, on the other hand, if in the course of the day we meet with some allurements to pleasure, we shall be easily decoyed to pursue it; because, as we commenced the day without prayer, we shall so far have no practical guidance of ourselves, but hasten to temptation as persons left without a guard; and thus the morning's neglect will recoil, and wound our conscience. Suppose, however, the morning's neglect to be followed by no ill consequences that we can perceive, still the day has been a day of danger, a day when the powers of darkness and of the world were virtually invited to come and try their strength. It has been a spiritual blank, or a lost day. Our satisfaction in the review of it has been that of a worldly man, and nothing higher. We have had, perhaps, a busy day; and so had he. Our affairs have been diligently watched; and so have his. Now, had we begun the day with humble devotion; had we reflected, in rising from a sleep of peace and security, that we were now entered upon a day which brought us nearer to eternity, and that we knew not what duties, trials, or temptations, might, in the mysterious arrangements of Providence, await us; had we recollected that our days were *numbered*, and each of them "a day of salvation;" that before the night some distemper might begin its fatal work, or that some unforeseen ca-

lamity might translate us into an eternal state; had we considered, that the light of every morning introduces us into a world thickly strewn with temptations; and had we recollected how frequently on past days we had disquieted our conscience by trifling with sin; had we thought well, that every day has its own circle of duty which neither yesterday nor to-morrow can fulfil; and that, as time flies onward, a life to come rises in importance;—had we done all this, or even a part of this, and then fallen on our knees, and surrendered ourselves to the guidance, protection, and grace of God in Jesus Christ, then we should have entered the world with our defensive armour. And though a day thus sanctified would not be spent in the closet, yet we should live through the hours of duty and temptation and pleasure in the *spirit* of devotion; and thus we should, in a practical sense, "pray always." Our conduct would illustrate our prayers.

But when the Apostle in the text enjoins constancy in devotion, we may extend his injunction to the practice of inward acts of supplication. The utterance of the lip is far from being essential to the existence or to the sincerity of prayer. It may be performed with the most perfect acceptance in the house, or in the field; in solitude, or in a crowd. Habitual practice of this duty tends much to keep the thoughts in their proper station. It preserves them from wandering, and from feeding upon vanity and sin. It gives a man self-command, furnishes him with new proofs of his spiritual weakness, directs him to the source of spiritual strength, produces a familiarity with heavenly subjects, and gives an elevated direction to the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Again; as prayer should be performed at all time so there are peculiar seasons which demand its exercise with more than common seriousness and fervour. In every person's life are circumstances of trial and enjoyment especially his

own, and concerning which another person can judge but little, even when every secret is revealed and his counsel earnestly sought. There are also some cases in which a person cannot persuade himself to disclose his mind to any, not even to his most intimate friends. Further, there are other circumstances, where, after all the efforts of ourselves and the wisest advisers nothing can be done, but we remain in perplexity and confusion. On all these occasions, when earthly assistance and consolation seem finally to desert us, there is certainly an extraordinary refuge reserved to us in the encouragement and command held out in the Gospel, that we should go and submit our sorrows and every feeling of despair before God in Christ Jesus. At the throne of grace we may pour out our whole heart without any apprehension, open our most hidden distresses, confess our most humbling weaknesses, speak as to a friend of infinite compassion, of infinite patience, and of power sufficient to deliver us from every trouble.

But I must here observe, that in the circumstances that have been supposed, a devout Christian has an advantage, and a mighty one, which a worldly man possesses not. The worldly man may, indeed, cry to God in the pressure of severe distress; but he has not the confidence towards Him which is the hope and consolation of a believer. A believer advances towards the Divine presence on firm ground. Though once, in common with the bulk of mankind, far off from the privilege of Divine communion, yet he is now "brought nigh by the blood of Christ." In this state of reconciliation, he offers, not the extorted petitions of one who is compelled to pray to God because the world can do nothing for him, but the filial plea of one adopted unto the family of God, and, through the Son of the Blessed, entitled to the privileges of the kingdom of heaven. St. Paul says, "Let us come *boldly* to the Throne of Grace, that we may

obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." I do not presume to assert that a person really reconciled to God is always conscious of the reconciliation; but it is safe to assure ourselves, that in proportion to the vigour of our graces we have reason to expect from the Almighty an answer to our prayers.

As to such seasons of unusual trouble as overtake practical believers, they, perhaps, may be equally severe with such as are endured by the most abandoned sinners. But be distress what it may, it will never be so poignant to a Christian as to a worldling. Chiefly because he lives in the spirit and practice of prayer, affliction loses much of its malignity: he regards it, indeed, as the natural consequence and penalty of sin, but still refers it to the partial tenderness of his Lord, who professes to administer chastisement as a means of increasing both the dignity and the enjoyments of the divine life. To a son thus disciplined the days of darkness are seasons of extraordinary devotion, and in the natural course of grace, seasons of spiritual prosperity. If the affliction be not removed, the sufferer will have peace in looking back upon the unreserved surrender of himself, when he adopted the language, and humbly endeavoured to partake of the spirit of Christ, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

And again; it may in this place be remarked, that the beginnings or the various accidents of a religious life are peculiarly marked out by the necessity and the exercise of prayer. In many persons at an early period of their spiritual renovation, there is a strong reluctance to unveil their thoughts to others. They would be glad to open their minds to their minister, or to some prudent friend; but this is not done, though counsel is much needed. Here then is a case where a private application to the Throne of Grace

may at once point out and supply the deficiency of human means. If you are unable to bring yourself to ask instruction of man, go to the Fountain Head, to the living Spring of all wisdom. Enter into your closet, and in the presence of God reveal all your ignorance, perplexity, wants—your whole mind. Himself declares, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” You find it impossible to overcome your unwillingness to refer your doubts to a fellow-creature. This may not be an ill sign. You had much better distrust yourself, and cultivate a modest and retiring temper of mind, than be forward and talkative about your new opinions: for, among the temptations which belong to the infancy of religion in the human soul, is that of thinking our hearts changed when we have merely altered our sentiments. Perhaps your principles may acquire more strength and maturity, if they are undisturbed either by the wisdom or folly of mankind; if they are left, as it were, to the unobstructed operation of that grace, which will be vouchsafed to fervent and sincere devotion.

Circumstances in the advanced periods of the divine life not seldom call for unusual measures of prayer. Religion, however unchangeable in itself, is confided to the mind of an uncertain creature: “We have this treasure in earthen vessels.” How few Christians safely reach their eternal rest, who in the journey thither have not had sad occasion to weep over their mistakes, their occasional deviations, and their falls! While connected with a mortal state, they are ever in danger. When, therefore, a professed Christian has perplexed his conscience by a sin of omission, or by some practical guilt, his recovery must, under God, be obtained by prayer. As religious declensions generally begin by the neglect of private devotion, so a firmer standing in the ways of godli-
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ness is acquired by a return to the forgotten duty. The spirit and the habit of devotion are a security against losing ground; and when a backslider begins to recover his former place, he will be found in the posture of a suppliant. He will regard his future strength as essentially linked with prayer. As a relapse into sin discovered his weakness, he will, should he continue sincere, learn a salutary lesson of humility and caution.

Thus far I have endeavoured to explain the meaning of “praying always.” The amount appears to be, that we should live not barely in the outward practice, but in the fervid spirit of devotion, suiting our prayers to our several circumstances, enlarging them at peculiar seasons, and making the leading events of our lives, whether temporal or spiritual, the causes and subjects of prayer.

Indeed, without the habitual performance of a duty divinely appointed, and so well fitted to the nature and wants of mankind, there can be no growth in grace. The Son of God well urged upon us the efficacy of praying without weariness by the parable of the importunate widow, who, by continually imploring the judge to give her redress, finally prevailed, and obtained her petition. This account Jesus delivered, “to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint.” St. Paul exhorts the Romans to continue “instant in prayer;” and says to the Thessalonians, “Pray without ceasing.”

Before I proceed to any farther explanation of the text, which will be reserved for a future opportunity, I would remark, how necessary it is to have a right judgment in religious concerns! The connection of this observation with the general subject arises from the propriety of considering the proper seasons, subjects, and effects of prayer. Here a right judgment is certainly requisite. If we do not well select the seasons of devotion, we shall be in danger of confusing one duty with another. A

person must not be on his knees when he ought to be actively employed in the needful business of the world; neither should the lawful engagements of life detain him from the essential duties of devotion. Christian sagacity discovers itself by dividing time most profitably among various duties, all of which are most usefully performed when transacted separately; for if they are managed without regard to time and place, they are confounded, and of course, done with no certain and permanent effect. That which at the present hour may be our first duty, may in the next assume the character of sin itself. But if things be regularly arranged, devotion will prepare for other duties, and the whole range of other duties will dispose to prayer. We must ever bear in mind, that as true religion properly enters into every thing, so all portions of a Christian's time, and all the engagements of his life, may be improved to his religious advantage. Every lawful application of time may, in its degree, be "sanctified by the word of God and prayer."—It is also highly necessary to understand the proper topics of prayer. Here also is required a sound judgment. We must endeavour to find out with accuracy what our principal wants are, and not exhaust our devotion in asking for things of merely secondary importance. It is well to examine and understand the modes of sin peculiar to ourselves, even such as "easily beset us," and harass us by temptations. Does not this examination of our inward character call for the exercise of a sound judgment?—Farther; inquire into the natural or just effects of prayer. If we find that an ability to utter the language of devotion with fluency, and a feeling of present pleasure, tends rather to puff us up with a high notion of our religious attainments; or, if we find, that when we have gone from the closet to the world, our lives contradict our prayers; in either case, our petitions must be regarded as formal and insincere. We have talk-

ed, it may be, not unwisely; but we come forth and join the circle of folly and hypocrisy. On the other hand, if devotion lead us onward to humility, to dependance upon the grace and mercy of God in Jesus Christ, to new and self-abasing convictions of our natural aversion from the gospel and cross of Christ; if our confessions have verily been "the sighings of a contrite heart," and not the borrowed language and unmeaning general expressions of a mere speculatist in evangelical doctrine; if we retire from our devotions to the duties of our stations, as those who in truth desire to have "the mind which was in Christ Jesus;" if we become more like him, and perseveringly desire to place ourselves under his guidance; then, we pray in spirit, in sincerity, in a disposition already sanctified and deriving increase of sanctification by every exercise of godliness; we realize our prayers in our lives; our general duties help forward our devotion; our devotion prepares us for the active and industrious discharge of life's daily duties; prayer is heard and evidently answered; the divine life receives fresh supplies of vigour and vitality; the opening visions of the eternal world become brighter; and we are waiting for that period when the prayers of sinners passing through a rough and thorny state shall be exchanged for the songs of the redeemed before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In religion, as in the most solid systems of this world's philosophy, we are required to reason from effects to causes; and the rule applies with peculiar accuracy to the subject of this discourse. We have no need to go to the professors of a corrupt scheme of Christianity (that, for example, from which the Reformation separated our own communion,) to understand the waywardness of the human mind in mistaking an act of devotion outwardly performed for a proof of religious sincerity; for this error is natural to man as man, and not as a convert to any human

creed. We, perhaps, give ourselves credit for having fathomed the shallowness, and detected the pollution, of the streams which heresy has diverted from the fountain of living waters; and so far the credit may be our due. But from what depths, and from what unsullied streams, have we ourselves drunk! We may have complained of the miserable mistakes and reprobate lives of such persons as were educated by the priests and patrons of a secularised gospel, and have wondered how men could imagine their salvation or ruin to depend upon the heartless utterance of strange and superstitious prayers; but, oh, let us wonder at ourselves, that we can fluently speak the scripturally authorized periods of devotion, and nevertheless rise from our knees and mingle in the business and relaxations of life, as though our prayers were heartless too, and their language and doctrine also strange and superstitious! We are as we live, and not as we pray; and our prayers, in regard to their truth and efficacy, are as we sustain what may be termed the character of the closet by extending the proper influence of devotion to the hourly concerns of life. Let us then look to ourselves. We have before us a proof of our spiritual sincerity. Our prayers, in their effects, are the test of our faith.

An ancient father of the church (St. Augustine) confesses, that in his unconverted state he prayed that he might be cured of a certain sin; but in the very act of supplication, he secretly hoped that God, in this instance, would not hear him. How useful is the lesson that may be drawn from this confession! And how seriously ought we to try and examine our own hearts, in order to acquaint ourselves, whether we really wish to have our petitions granted, or miserably delude and quiet conscience by persuading ourselves that the mere utterance of a prayer is all the debt we owe; and that if God will not remove our sins when we have once or twice asked him to do so, we may be

excused in his sight, even when we habitually practice them, and hurry from the confessions of the closet to the indulgence of passion and vanity. May we all be saved from this, and every other delusion, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

For the Christian Observer.

ON TRUSTING IN GOD.

THERE is a sonnet, in a collection of Italian poetry, by Muratori, which struck me, when I formerly read it, as eloquent and affecting. I do not recollect the words, and can give even the idea only imperfectly; but it is something of this sort: "Where shall I find a friend whose merits will never disappoint, and whose love never will forsake me? I have surveyed the world, and sought where my affections might repose. But some have forgotten me, some have proved faithless to my hopes, and some have been torn from me by death. Oh my Saviour, thou remainest always true, and for ever present with me!"

The complaint of the poet expresses, perhaps, a little of the character which often belongs to persons of a very quick sensibility: it betrays a delicacy rather too refined, and a tone of feeling naturally somewhat disposed to sadness. Yet his sorrows were probably real; and the sentiment he utters, though slightly shaded with melancholy, is just, noble, and affecting. Such is the imperfection of human characters, and such the uncertainty of earthly blessings, that few probably pass even through a third part of life without witnessing the dissolution of some attachments which were once dear to them; and none certainly can advance to a mature age without being sensible of a pang still more severe in a long and awful separation from those they love. Yet, in all our disappointments and sorrows, one Friend is still nearer to us, whose kindness is ever most wakeful when

we most need it; who can neither forsake us from levity, nor be snatched away from us by death.

It is indeed an unspeakable consolation, to every reflective and feeling mind, that, amidst all the changes and chances, the disappointments and vanities around us, there is One who is permanent and perfect. The idea of that awful Being, who is the Father of the universe and the Centre of all excellence, is so congenial to the human mind, that, even if it were impossible to prove his existence by reasonable inferences, I think we should be constrained to believe it from a necessity of finding something to sustain us under the sense of our weakness. For such a support, it is in vain that we look round upon each other. Every face is pale with the same fear; and the tongue of the wise, which should speak consolation, is faltering with the confession of its own helplessness. Take but God away, and the mighty vision around us is only a feverish dream;—a short, irregular, incomprehensible drama, of which man is at once the feeble actor and unmeaning spectator, “strutting his hour upon the stage,” and then vanishing for ever.

But God, of his great goodness, has not suffered us to wander about in darkness. He has taught us, by the works of his providence, and by the word of his Spirit, “that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Nor is this all. To know indeed this alone, would have been an unspeakable privilege and blessing; it is more than the wisest discerned clearly in ancient days. But to us, the chosen seed, adopted and beloved in the Redeemer, God has revealed himself, not merely as the Maker and Judge of the universe; nay, not simply as its general Guardian and Benefactor: He has taught us to regard him as a reconciled Father; a watchful, tender, and unfailing Friend. This is the character he has vouchsafed in mercy to assume; to this blessed relation

he invites us; a relation of dignity unrivalled, of incomparable security, and ineffable happiness. He calls upon us to come to him with humble and thankful hearts; to place our whole confidence in him; to believe that he really loves us, and act as if we believed it; to accept, as freely as he offers it, the gift of everlasting life; and, casting away together our sins and our solicitude, to walk henceforth as children of a Parent who can never fail them,—“heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.”

Surely I need not stop to qualify what has been said. The God of purity can be approached only by the pure; and though all are freely addressed, they only may presume to trust in God as their Father, who have first learned to trust in Christ as their Saviour; who have laid down the burden of their sins before the cross; and received from their Redeemer, “into an honest and good heart” the Spirit of sanctification. But “leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ” (which, though, like other rudiments, the foundation of all knowledge, we ought not to be for ever employed in laying afresh) let us employ a few moments in contemplating more nearly the duty which I have inscribed as a title to this paper—the duty of *trusting in God*.

Consider who it is that calls upon us to put our trust in him: “God, that made the earth, and all things that are therein.” In what language shall I presume to speak of him! The most extraordinary genius of modern times* never pronounced the awful name of God, without a pause. It is an idea which fills the mind at once, and which the highest natures will always contemplate with the profoundest reverence. As the most perfect optical instruments, enabling us to extend on every side the range of our vision, only discover new worlds and celestial wonders bursting upon our view in every direction through the illimitable regions of space; so when

* Sir Isaac Newton.

we contemplate the Deity, the most daring flight of imagination, the utmost comprehension of thought, instead of fathoming that mysterious and ineffable idea, are themselves lost in the survey of the unexhausted and inexhaustible riches that spread and multiply around them. To the dignity of such a subject, no created being can possibly do justice. He is first, and last, and midst; "that is, and that was, and that is to come." He formed all things by his word; he sustains and permeates the whole creation. Nothing is too vast for the controul of his dominion; nothing too little for the vigilance of his inspection. Let us endeavour to conceive whatever is supreme in power, comprehensive in wisdom, perfect in purity, and enchanting in goodness, and we shall present to ourselves, not indeed a living picture of the Deity (for how could we support its lustre!), but a faint and shaded image of him, such as our mortal vision may bear to contemplate. "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou regardest him!"

It is worthy of remark, and perhaps no mean argument of the truth of revelation, that, of all the varied systems of religion which have prevailed in the world, the Jewish and Christian is that which has alone presented the one supreme God, as the proper and direct object of worship, with any distinctness to the minds of its votaries. Paganism peopled every vale and mountain, every stream and forest, the air, the earth, and the ocean, with tutelary intelligences; but the great First Cause was unknown to the creeds of popular superstition, and was sought only in the schools of the philosophers. In the Indian mythology (which indeed was the same in its origin,) a like peculiarity is observable. The Supreme Being is never presented to the vulgar eye. Some more thoughtful disciple of Vyasa, in the shades of Benares, may inquire into his nature, and adore him in secret; but the poor Hindoo is content to pay his homage to Surya,

or Ganga, or Mariataly, or some other of the numberless spiritual agents who preside over the objects of nature and classes of society, with limited powers and local jurisdictions. The like tendency of human nature to retire from the contemplation of a Being too great to be understood by the careless, and too excellent to be loved by the sinful, has been manifest during many periods of the popish superstition, and remains still visible in some dark corners of its dominions. The whole host of canonised saints and martyrs owe their idolatrous pre-eminence to the same principle which planted Minerva at Syracuse, Diana at Ephesus, and Jupiter in the Capitol. Their jurisdiction too, like the deities of old, extends only over a limited class of worshippers. Santa Rosalia is in high honour at Palermo; but Santa Maria would be justly jealous, if she claimed any authority at Trapani. The patron saint of Catania has often arrested the fiery streams which burst from the sides of *Ætna*, but she works no miracles at Syracuse.

I cannot help observing, also, that those bolder geniuses, who of late years have rejected Christianity as a dispensation unworthy of the wisdom and equity of God, have by no means done credit to their own, *more rational and simple*, scheme of religion, by sublimer delineations of the character of the Almighty, or the expression of a profounder reverence towards him. Mr. Hume's language, in those parts of his *Essays* where he touches on the attributes of God, is very highly presumptuous: and his private correspondence was profane. Voltaire, a sincere Theist, in one of his lighter works, speaks of the moral government of the Deity in terms of the most insolent and offensive levity. And so little tendency had his speculations to produce an increased veneration towards the Author of all things, that neither his reproaches nor his authority were sufficient to prevent some of the most illustrious of his pupils from pushing his principles to the direct disavowal

of a First Cause. Both Diderot and Condorcet were atheists. The former, in one of his letters, says; "*Ce pauvre Voltaire radote un peu. Il avouait l'autre jour qu'il croyait à l'être du Dieu.*" D'Alembert laboured pretty generally under the same imputation; but La Harpe says in his letters, that he had frequently heard him (D'Alembert) say, "*que la probabilité était pour le Theisme.*" *La probabilité!*—and is this all that a man possessed of so fine and profound a genius could discover of that August Being to whose bounty he owed the enjoyment of all his distinguished faculties?

Oh, star-eyed Science? hast thou wandered there,

To waft us home the lesson of despair?

It is impossible not to be struck at the vast superiority which the simplest among the faithful followers of Christ possesses, upon these subjects, over the great masters of modern wisdom. The utmost that D'Alembert could discover, or would consent to believe, was, that the presumption is in favour of the existence of a Deity. The true Christian, however little enlightened by secular science, has learned not only to clothe the idea of God with every attribute of intellectual and moral greatness, but he even presumes without fear to draw down and appropriate, as it were, to himself, the blessed object of his homage; to believe, that He who fills the universe with his majesty disdains not to visit the abode of the meanest of his servants, to watch over him with paternal affection and solicitude, to listen to all his prayers, to regard his humblest wishes, to be present to the most secret sorrows and anxieties of his bosom: "He is about our path, and about our bed, and spieth out all our ways." I will not say whether the creed of the disciple of Christ, or the disciple of Voltaire, be the most philosophical; but I know which is the most sublime and most consoling.

God invites us to put our trust in him. And is he not trustworthy? The ordinary blessings of life are apt to escape our notice; but our heavenly Father undoubtedly intended them as assurances of his unfailing providence. We can imagine, indeed, a state of existence, of such a nature, that the whole series of circumstances and events should appear to be the mechanical results of some one original impulse. Or we may suppose a world so constituted, that every thing should be manifestly directed by man, as the efficient agent; in which his activity and foresight would be the final causes of all visible things. Under such economies, it might perhaps be pardonable for us to think of the Deity (like the old Epicureans) as the spectator, rather than as the governor of the universe; to acknowledge his general authority, without much regarding his providence. But these are the dreams of fancy, not the realities of nature. The world in which we live is so constituted, that every thing seems to proclaim aloud the perpetual presence of the Almighty. The free-agency of man (that is, his real, and not merely necessary or nominal agency,) though a matter of instinctive and indestructible belief to every one of us, is, in argument, far more difficult of proof than the constant and efficient providence of God. There is not a single phenomenon of thought or perception, respecting which, when correctly analysed, we are not compelled to confess, that we can render no account of it, except, that such is the will of our Creator. The history of all physical science is precisely the same. Gravitation, which has assisted us to explain so many of the celestial phenomena, is only a law or tendency, apparent in visible things, of which we can prove the existence, but have discovered nothing more. The chemical properties of bodies are merely appearances, which we may perfectly un-

derstand as facts, but which the most skillful examination can only enable us to resolve into other more general appearances; leaving us, with respect to causation, in the same obscurity. Every science has its ultimate principles, and every ultimate principle brings us at once to God. Nor are the lights of philosophy at all necessary for the discovery of this truth. Like the elements of light and heat, it impresses itself on the feelings of the simple, while it speaks to the understandings of the learned. It is the language of every thing within us and around us. The organization of our bodies is so wonderfully delicate, the ramifications of the vascular and nervous systems are so amazingly fine, and interwoven with such intricacy, that it is difficult to conceive how we could be kept alive for a single hour, without the preserving power of our Creator unceasingly exercised upon us. And what is the ordinary course of our conduct and experience, but one continued testimony to the watchful providence of God? We lie down upon our beds at the close of day, and consign ourselves, without the slightest solicitude, to a state of passive inefficiency for many hours, well assured that we shall awake on the ensuing morning with every function of life restored and refreshed. We commit the seed to the earth, in full assurance that, after a few weeks, it will spring up in a new form, and that "our valleys will stand thick with corn." Day by day we are clothed and fed, though our hands have neither wrought in the loom nor wielded the sickle. It is idle to speak of this as effected by the mechanism of society: it is provided by the economy of God, who has formed us so wonderfully, and so regularly operates on the faculties and feelings he has given, that every one is secure of finding the supply of his wants in the knowledge and industry of his neighbour. It is difficult to conceive a spectacle more striking than that which is exhibited every day in a great nation; where

ten, or twenty, or thirty millions of beings, not one of whom can support life without a regular supply of food, retire calmly to rest at night, in a perfect confidence that they shall find a supply for their wants on the following day. Need I add to these general proofs of the superintending care and vigilance of God, those personal experiences, which all of us, I am persuaded, possess of his particular providence? These indeed are less fitted for argument than the public demonstrations of his agency; but I appeal to all who have watched the events of their lives with any diligence, whether they have not frequently been of a nature to produce *upon their own minds* a powerful and reasonable conviction, that the Almighty does not behold them with indifference; that he neither forgets their iniquities nor despises their sufferings; but mingles mercy with judgment, and vindicates his goodness in both.

If, then, we are persuaded (as surely we must be,) that God is both infinite in excellence and highly deserving of our confidence, let us consider what it is to put our trust in him. The true nature of a thing may generally be best understood by contemplating its most perfect specimen. Trust in God was exhibited in its utmost possible perfection, when Christ hung upon the cross for man. He could have called down legions of angels, but he knew what was the will of his Father, and "he committed himself to him who judgeth righteously." His strength and spirits sank under his sufferings; the powers of darkness were triumphant; the shades of death gathered fast around him; his God had forsaken him; yet the last accent that faltered on his lips avowed his full conviction, that the arm of the Lord was not shortened, nor the empire of righteousness subverted. It is the peculiar character of a lively trust in God, that "against hope it believeth in hope. When all is cheerful around, and health and friends and fortune unite to shower their boun-

ties on us, there is little danger of falling into an anxious, desponding temper. But health is not always firm, friends are not ever present, and fortune is exceedingly fickle. Perhaps some little distress first overtakes us; vexations and disappointments follow; a diminution of fortune succeeds; sorrows thicken fast upon us; the strong wall, that seemed to fence in our blessings so securely, is almost levelled; and calamities roll in, wave after wave, till we are ready to perish. How is it with us now? Can we still repose on the watchful providence of God, and trust in his mercy? Let us remember, that these are the seasons in which the character is to be strengthened, and the sincerity of our professions established. Can we say that we love God, when the flame of our affection is ready to expire with the first gust of misfortune? Do we pretend that we put our whole trust in him, and yet despair of his mercy, and almost deny his providence, though nothing in the whole world is altered but our condition? It is alike the office of reason and of faith to correct the delusions of our senses, to place things before us in their true proportions, and prevent our being deceived by mere appearances. A firm trust in the wisdom and beneficence of God is at once the evidence and exercise of both.

But the duty of trusting in God is not limited to the seasons of distress. Then, indeed, it is the most severely tried; and in proportion to the severity of the trial it is invigorated. But the general uncertainty of human concerns requires an internal principle of strength that is equally extensive; the constant care and kindness of our Maker demand the return of an unceasing confidence. Trust in God will produce in every period, and under all the varied circumstances of life, a settled preference of spiritual things over those which are temporal. Suppose any conceivable temptation: the question always is, do you dare to rely upon

the faithfulness of your Maker; to renounce the pleasure, to support the suffering, from a rational regard to his will; to "endure, as seeing him who is invisible?" Let it not be imagined that the seasons in which this duty is to be exercised recur only at intervals; they are daily and hourly. You are poor, perhaps, and some sad child of affliction comes to plead for your compassion: trust in God, and be bountiful. You are engaged in business, and others, less scrupulous than you, are advancing before you: trust in God, and be just. You are so peculiarly situated, that a slight prevarication or improper concealment would greatly favour your interests, and enable you to prevent serious uneasiness to yourself or others: trust in God, and be sincere. Whoever will honestly attend to all the various occasions in which he is called upon to testify his confidence in God by acting in contradiction to present appearances, will assuredly discover that this principle, though its utmost energies are developed only under the pressure of great calamities, communicates its influence to the minutest concerns; insinuating itself insensibly, where the Christian character is matured, into the whole system of life; and, like the element we breathe, imparting purity and vigour wherever it prevails, though itself, perhaps, unseen by those whom it refreshes.

It is natural, for those whose hearts are deeply penetrated with a sense of the beneficence of their Maker, to inquire with some solicitude how they may offer to him an acceptable service; what are the actions, what the dispositions, which he will consider as more peculiarly consecrated to his glory. Certainly, among the many motives which recommend the duty of putting our trust in God, the consideration best fitted to affect a grateful and generous spirit is, that it is a homage peculiarly pleasing to his Creator. It may even be said, without presumption, that it is a tri-

bute in some measure worthy of him. We have confidence in those we love. We have confidence in those whom we highly esteem and venerate. To trust in God, is to declare practically (and this is a very different matter from the mere profession,) that we believe him to be such as he really is, all-powerful, of unfailing wisdom and faithfulness, abundant in mercy and loving kindness. This is an acknowledgment which in the nature of things *must* be acceptable. It is a service not of the lips, but of the heart. It is an avowal in the sight of the universe, that "this God is our God." It is a solemn and effective recognition of his authority, and of our entire resignation to it. What parent is not gratified to find, that in the midst of apparent severity or neglect his child has ever placed an entire reliance on his affection? Who does not feel his heart glow with gratitude towards those who have loved him in absence and silence, and with perhaps the appearances of alienation on his part? When Alexander gave into the hands of his friend and physician the paper which accused him of perfidy, and in the same instant swallowed the medicine which he was informed would be fatal, what words can do justice to the feelings of both? We are not presumptuous in thus transferring the ideas which are attached to the most intimate relations in this life to spiritual concerns; because, when God vouchsafed to assume the characters under which he has revealed himself to us in holy writ, he certainly intended not merely to instruct us in our duties towards him, but to animate and console us by the communication of his sentiments and dispositions towards us. And conformably to these views, we find, that of the many celebrated actions of holy men which have been handed down to us, none are marked with stronger testimonies of the approbation of God, than those which indicated a very lively confidence in him. Such was Abraham's departure from his native land, and that solemn act of faith

by which he offered up his only begotten son. Such was the cheerful courage of Caleb and Joshua, when the body of the Israelites refused to march into the land of Canaan. Such was "the holy enthusiasm of young David," when he fought and slew the champion of the Philistines. Such was the pious humility of Hezekiah, when he committed to God the protection of his people against the overwhelming forces of the Assyrians. "Now these things were written for our example, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope."

It seems a sort of injustice to the subject, after urging the motives for putting our trust in God which have been last mentioned, to speak of the benefits which will result to ourselves. God, however, who knows his creatures and desires their happiness, has multiplied the inducements to his service, so that no reasonable or virtuous principle of action in the heart of man may be left unaddressed. Indeed, the rewards which he proposes to Christians, are of so spiritual a nature, that while, contemplated in one aspect, they appear fitted to operate upon that sense of interest and rational desire of happiness which belongs to every living creature, in another character they address the feelings of the heart in a language of the most persuasive eloquence. The blessings which Revelation offers are ever of a nature to bring us nearer to God, the source and consummation of them all. This great principle, which breathes through the whole of religion, is visible in that portion of it which we are now considering.

I know not, indeed, that any words can more beautifully describe the blessedness of trusting in God, than those of the twenty-third Psalm; "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in

the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." What cheerfulness, what courage, what peace, what holy gratitude and heavenly piety breathe through this noble composition! These are the rewards of placing our confidence in God; and, however our timid hearts and wavering intellects may deceive us, these are the true and everlasting sources of happiness. These are the riches with which no stranger intermeddles. "The kingdom of heaven is within you." In this land of shadows visible things are continually pressing upon the senses, and a careless unreflecting world pays them a ready homage. We admire wealth; we value highly the estimation of our neighbours; we are vain of hereditary honours; we pant for political renown. Poverty and unimportance in society are dreaded, as the last of evils. We are frightened with phantoms, and grasp at baubles. But, whoever will set himself to read the word of God diligently, and with honesty and courage contemplate the real nature of

things, will be convinced that no external good can constitute the proper happiness of a being such as man. Born for immortality, and endowed with an intellectual and moral nature, his true felicity must certainly be sought in those things which are permanent as himself; in whatever may furnish a fit and noble employment for his faculties, or awaken his feelings to emotions of generosity and affection. Thanks be to God, this world, with all its imperfections, supplies abundantly occasions for both. But God is himself the highest object to which the soul in all its powers can be directed. None ever trusted in him, without increasing in spiritual strength. None ever trusted in him, without discovering more and more of the plans of his providence, and of the depth of his unsearchable wisdom. None ever trusted in him, without tasting largely of his bounty. To trust in God, in its more advanced state, is to have the image of his perfections ever before us; to live in his continual presence, encircled, as it were, by the visible forms of his majesty and goodness. What words can adequately portray the dignity of such a condition; the tranquillity it communicates, the courage it inspires, the joy, and gratitude, and holy affections it breathes through the soul! "Oh taste and see how gracious the Lord is; blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

CRITO.

MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

FAR, very far, be it from me, or from any enlightened member of the Established Church, to blame the conduct of her governors, from any less honourable motive than that of attempting to rescue their future pro-

ceedings from the suspicion of feebleness and disorder. Assuming the credit of this motive in the present address, I cannot dissemble the mortification and regret which, in common with numbers of the clergy and laity, I have undergone, in observing the fallen character of the

occasional state prayers and thanksgivings.

These formularies, according to the official notices in the Gazette, are compiled by the aggregate wisdom of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland; and certainly ought to be so constructed as, at least, not to disgrace the most dignified Protestant hierarchy in the world, by such sentiment or phraseology as might appear to justify the reproaches of rival establishments, and to confirm the antipathy of unbelievers and separatists.

From whatever cause, the prayer for the recovery of his Majesty has been *altered*. The variation of the original form was determined upon, as some imagined, from the circumstance of its being inexpedient to refer to the death of the Princess Amelia, beyond a definite period of mourning. This satisfactorily accounts for the alteration, as far as the departure of her Royal Highness was connected with the prayer: but the omission of a passage in the same form, which was generally censured as an ill-timed example of sentimental vulgarity,* awoke a suspicion, that the correction had taken place with a view to quiet the murmurs of those who had reminded the Consistory of the oversight they had committed, in exposing—and in these days of vigilant hostility!—public acts of the church to the triumphant contempt of her opponents. The emendation, however, was far from rendering the prayer invulnerable; for to this hour, the feelings of many considerate and devout clergymen are certainly not elevated by repeating, “Let not our prayers assume the language of complaint, nor our sorrows the character of despair;”—a sentence built of materials to be found in such school

* “For which our hearts bleed;” or something in the same style. I have no copy of the prayer.

exercises as are elaborated by boys eminent for poising words, without disturbing themselves about their use.

Scarcely had the lovers of ecclesiastical order congratulated each other on the supposed condescension and prudence of their superiors, than they were compelled to witness a second effort to lower the reputation of our liturgical establishment. You will anticipate my allusion to the form lately issued, respecting the success of the British arms in Spain. Whether you will perpetuate this act of state devotion, by transferring it from the enclosed loose sheet to your own work, is left to your discretion. I recommend its insertion myself. We have all so far an interest in the preservation of this document, as to save it from oblivion; if for no other cause, yet for this, that should a brighter period dawn upon the present ecclesiastical gloom, we may, with emotions of sober triumph, compare the sublimity, the fervour, and the unction of future acts of public supplication and gratitude, with the depressed character, the frigidity, and the earthliness which have too evidently marked our recent formularies.

The state thanksgiving for the victory of Salamanca, follows:

“Gracious God, accept we implore Thee the praises and thanksgivings of a grateful nation, for the successes Thou hast repeatedly vouchsafed to the allied army, in Portugal and Spain, and especially for the signal victory recently obtained in the neighbourhood of Salamanca.

“Thine O God is the greatness, and the power, and the victory, and the majesty: without Thee, there is neither success in the wisdom, nor strength in the courage of man: the skill of the captain, and the obedience of the soldier, are thine.

“Direct our hearts O God! so to exult in victory, that we forget not whence it cometh; so to use it, that

we provoke not Thy heavy displeasure against us.

"Continue we pray Thee, Thy favour and protection to our captains, and soldiers, and allies. Unite their counsels, and prosper their enterprises for the general good. And of Thy great mercy O God! open the eyes of our blinded and infatuated enemies; that they may see and understand the wickedness they are working. Touch them with the spirit of remorse; awaken their justice; and correct their inordinate ambition: so that at Thy appointed time, and under Thy good providence, the miseries of war may cease, and destructions be brought to a perpetual end.

"These prayers and thanksgivings we humbly submit to Thy Divine Majesty, in the name and through the mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*"

In the introductory paragraph of this address, it is impossible to forget, or to censure, a canon enforced by all the masters of eloquence, even by such among those masters as are mere repeaters of technical rules, mere men of nouns and participles,—namely, that if you wish to impress, have a care of descending from imposing generalities, into the deeps, and lowest deeps, of minuteness, and common-life detail. What accession of devotional feeling, or of high-toned sentiment, could be gathered from the geographical items in this passage, is not very obvious; especially when no member of the united church could suspect that any other allied army could be meant than the confederates in the Peninsula; nor could be thankful for any recent victory except the one achieved by Lord Wellington. But, oh the climax! "in the neighbourhood of Salamanca!" If minuteness in state forms of prayer be supposed to invest them with an air of imperial dignity, future compilers may readily gather materials for devotion, in the des-

patches forwarded to the War-Office and Admiralty. Most unfortunately, the majority of English readers connect the name of Salamanca with the popular hero of Le Sage; and not a few of them have an inconvenient recollection of an epitaph constructed under the plenary influence of the art of sinking:—

And thou, Dalhousie, the great god of war,
Lieutenant-colonel to the Earl of Mar.

If *names* must be introduced at all, and particularly if they are meant to invigorate and point a period, it is advisable to select such as may not enfeeble what already totters; nor impose a new burden upon that which is in danger of descending by its own gravity.

The fourth paragraph in this form has been a cause of unpleasantness to many thinking persons, by its redundant vituperation of the French government. Our enemies are blinded; infatuated; working wickedness; inordinately ambitious; no spirit of remorse; no justice. The question is not, whether this accumulated guilt be righteously chargeable upon Bonaparte, his agents, and partisans; but whether we have a right to be abusive in prayer. There is, doubtless, a strong temptation, in drawing up public acts of devotion, to express public feelings; and in the circumstances of Europe, the sublime and celestial virtues of forbearance, and compassion, and charity, have indeed had a full and long-continued opportunity of having their perfect work; and of exhibiting the triumph of Christianity over every feeling of resentment and vengeance. It is difficult to clear this paragraph from the imputation of personal enmity.

As to the phrase, "awaken their justice," it is surely unusual at best. To compel so learned a body as the English and Irish clergy to submit themselves not merely to questionable divinity, but to questionable phraseology, is an act of severity

which may amuse those who exert their power with more caprice than wisdom; but cannot strengthen their credit, nor conciliate their adversaries.

There is in every human establishment a tendency to stagnation; except where inactivity is succeeded by immediate loss; as, for example, in the case of commercial corporations; and even here the tendency exists, if the members composing these bodies are so numerous as to permit the feeling of individual interest and responsibility to lose itself in the mass, whenever an agent finds it convenient to screen his own delinquency, by charging a private error or fraud upon the general inadvertence. The effects of this stagnating principle are as visible in a national church, as in an establishment purely secular; and the progress of its operation in the church of England, is very discernible in our ecclesiastical history, from the Reformation to the early part of the eighteenth century. A progress precisely similar might have been traced, had the discipline of the church been presbyterian, or whatever had been the model, and not because it was adjusted by episcopalians; because, the existence of the stagnating principle depends upon no form of government, but simply and solely on the natural tendency of men, as men, to become indolent from security. I refer to this declension in our church, in order to observe, that when, at the Restoration, the two forms of public devotion for the Martyrdom of Charles the First, and for the Return of the Second Charles, were drawn up by the then hierarchy, a truly humiliating difference was discernible between the ancient liturgy as generally compiled by the Reformers, and these two appendages. When the Jews saw the second temple, they wept! The offices in question were, in fact, drawn up by Sancroft; a prelate, whose character these performances teach us to appreciate. For some

time, his productions were laid aside as improper; and other forms, constructed with sobriety and moderation, proposed to be adopted. But on Sancroft's succession to the primacy, he revived the energy of *Ego et Rex meus*, and contrived to introduce his own performances under the royal authority. They were accordingly inserted in the Prayer-book, as we now find them. After the Savoy conference, as Burnet relates, "a collect was also drawn up for the Parliament, in which a new epithet was added to the king's title, that gave great offence, and occasioned much indecent raillery: he was styled our most religious king. It was not easy to give a proper sense to this, and to make it go well down; since, whatever the signification of religious might be in the *Latin* word, as importing the sacredness of the king's person, yet in the *English* language it bore a signification that was in no way applicable to the king. And those who took great liberties with him, have often asked him, what must all his people think, when they heard him prayed for as their most religious king?" *Own Times*, 1661. —Would Cranmer, and Ridley, and Jewell, all high prerogative men, as is evident from the Homilies on Rebellion, have created a world of causeless mislike and irritation, for the sake of a single epithet; which even the good sense and easy nature of Charles the Second would first have laughed at, and then have discarded from the liturgy! But while the religious sensibility of that monarch's prelates was sufficiently stagnant, they were wide awake, and all in motion, when the debates of the times touched the prerogative. Their error was so far excusable, as being in the usual course of human things, the effervescence of minds fresh with the feelings of injury, and intoxicated with a recent and finished victory. We are relieved from the unpleasant emotions awakened by the consideration of their almost insolent exulta-

tions, by recollecting that the medals which commemorate Elizabeth's annihilation of the Spanish Armada bear simply the devout inscription, *Afflavit, et dissipantur !** And who has forgotten the first sentence of Lord Nelson's despatch after the battle of the Nile, "Almighty God has blessed his Majesty's arms with a great victory;"—and then this *glorious* man modestly tells the tale of the action, without any allusion to the unskilfulness or cowardice of the enemy; and preferring no meritorious claim of his own. I certainly shall not plead, that our admirals may for the future compose the state prayers; but the commanders of our clerical forces may befriend us all, by remembering the last telegraphic despatch before the battle of Trafalgar, *England expects every man to do his duty.*

It ought not to be expected that the United Church, or any other communion, should sustain, unimpaired, the high character of an age so peculiar as that of the Reformation. There seem to be eras in the history of mankind, when considerable bodies of men have acted with the concentrated purpose and effect of an individual. To create, however, this extraordinary energy, nothing short of a revolution in religious or political sentiments is adequate; and when the ferment subsides, and the concession of the weaker party releases their opponents from anxiety and immediate exertion, then the conqueror gradually falls asleep.

Tempus erat, quo prima quies mortalibus
ægris
 Incipit, et dono divum gratissima serpit.

But if the Greeks, after a feigned retreat, attack the imperial city, at midnight, with a concentrated force, or steal in through the gates opened by treachery, or left unguarded by false security, the shades of the mighty

dead will in vain disturb our slumbers. *Venit summa dies !*

It is unfair to complain that the formularies of these days are unequal to the Liturgy;* but it is certainly kind to ourselves to retain so much at least of the vigilance of our ancestors, as to preserve what they have bequeathed to us by endeavouring to shew *some* reverence for their compositions; in our desire to imitate (not to rival) what is properly capable of being imitated. Their use of scriptural language; their adaptation of secular terms to a devout purpose without secularizing the idea; their carefulness in purifying supplications to God from mere human passion; their consciousness of being themselves sinners, and needing all the compassion and pardon which they implore for their enemies; their pious address in making the mention of worldly affairs subserve petitions for the advancement of the kingdom of God;—all these are points of excellence, where we may safely copy, without presuming to arrogate to ourselves any thing beyond a wish to follow a bright example. If we dare not expect to equal our devout forefathers in the speed of their progress, we ought unquestionably to pursue its track; for the end of it is peace. Our state devotion might surely be characterized by negative excellence; even if a more exalted quality were perfectly unattainable. It would be better to acquiesce, than to be repelled. We sometimes bear with cheerfulness where we wish for improvement, without any sanguine hope of obtaining it; but what we thus endure should surely be fairly tolerable.

Political as well as religious opinions are connected with this sub-

* His present Majesty bore a little too hard upon the successors of Cranmer, when he remarked to Dr. Beattie, "Observe how flat those occasional prayers are, that are now composed, in comparison with the old ones!" Dr. Beattie's interview with their Majesties is inserted in your volume for 1807, pp. 513—515.

* See also a State Prayer of that day, vol. for 1807, p. 4.

ject. Mr. Gisborne writes:—"To draw up forms of public prayer on particular occasions falls within the province of the bishops. In framing them, care should be taken to shun adulation; and if the events to which they relate are of a political nature, all expressions should be avoided, as far as may be found practicable, which may be likely to wound the consciences of clergymen who are to use them. In the time of the American war, when the sentiments of the nation were so divided respecting the justice of the contest, it is probable that many clergymen of unquestionable loyalty and attachment to their sovereign entertained such opinions, or at least such doubts, on the subject, as to feel great scruples in delivering the strong language adopted in the prayers then prescribed" *Duties of Men*, ch. xi.—Mr. Gisborne's important statement reminds us of the embarrassment felt by many persons at the Restoration; who, however they execrated the murderers of Charles the First, were very far from adopting the views of the royal party in the contest with the parliament. They hesitated to denominate the opposition to the king's measures *The Great Rebellion*. The men referred to were not plebeians and puritans; but noblemen, and gentlemen of high consideration, and upholders of episcopal discipline. So far indeed were the puritans from being the main pillars of the Usurpation, that several of their most distinguished leaders were active in restoring the royal government. The conduct of Sancroft (above mentioned) under such circumstances was impolitic and feeble to an unaccountable degree. Had he possessed but an average share of foresight, he might have suspected that influence is a treasure never to be lavished away; and that it is extremely unwise to *waste in health the resources of sickness*.

There does not appear to be any authority vested in the bench, whereby a clergyman is *compelled* to use these forms. Some years since, Mr.

Daubeny refused to read a clause which, as he judged, was disorderly.* This omission was notorious; but nothing was done by his diocesan. Omissions indeed are, I believe, not unfrequent. I am certainly myself acquainted with many clergymen who mutilate according to their several notions of propriety. Some of them shelter their irregularity under Mr. Daubeny's sanction. How far all this is defensible I know not; but in the mean time the credit of the church at large is shaken. People argue that the clergy are wantonly disobedient to their superiors; or that they secretly blush for them, and are willing to conceal their vulnerable parts by reading only such a portion of the state prayers as presents no open front to the menace of an enemy, or to the kind suspicions of a friend. This unnatural state of things reminds me of what was said during the agitation of the Bullion Question;—During this depreciation of the currency, all the blame falls upon Government; all the loss upon the nation; and the Bank gains every thing. Without asserting or denying the justice of this tripartite statement, it is safe to aver that every degradation of the ecclesiastical power disgraces the bishops, injures the religious public, and aids the schemes of separatists. The church loses what she can least spare; and gains just nothing.

Reputation, Sir, is the life of a government. In proportion as this declines, the exchequer is virtually drained of its treasure, and the physical strength of the empire is enervated. Now the credit of the established church must necessarily sink, if her servants have so faltering a reliance on the sagacity of the hierarchy, as always to examine the mandates they are required to obey. Such a scrutiny is the germ of a civil convulsion. If the church persist in constructing formularies which are fairly open to the criticism of undergraduates and bishops' se-

* See Christian Observer for 1804, p. 46.

cretaries, numbers of her most sagacious friends will regard her determination as contributing, with other causes, to a disastrous issue. If she fall under such circumstances, she will not fall with dignity. The jury will hesitate between *lunacy* and *felo de se*. I hope we shall not live to walk over our mother's grave,—to see her buried with ignominy, exposed to the insulting gaze of strangers, and serving thenceforward as a practical thesis for the declamation of infidels and jesuits! It will then be too late for Mr. Simeon to publish sermons on the Excellence of the Liturgy; and Dr. Marsh may then gather the harvest of his exertions. The fall of a great establishment will not be "the consequence of neglecting to give the Prayer-book with the Bible;" particularly as no such neglect existed; but rather the consequence of neglecting to clothe our occasional formularies with something which will not force men of common information to talk loud and long about ecclesiastical degeneracy.

I may be accused of attributing great events to feeble causes. I do not, however, argue the ruin of the church exclusively from the composition of a prayer, but from the natural and notorious practice of mankind to judge by a thing done of the doer of it. If this rule be correct, they will, in the present case, judge by a prayer of the prayer-maker; exactly as they measure a preacher by his sermon; and exactly as they take the dimensions of Lord Wellington's military character by the battle "in the neighbourhood of Salamanca." The mass of men, and particularly men of the British islands, are downright, practical philosophers; reasoners *a posteriori*; occasional blunderers to be sure, and frequently patted out of a growl into a gambol; but, in the main, they are unwilling long to support what they cannot respect. To secure their fidelity, you must command their veneration. If their esteem be once forfeited and lost, to regain it may

require a more costly sacrifice than you may be able or ready to offer.

In adverting to the importance of public opinion, I must be understood to signify those of our countrymen who chose to think for themselves; and who, from a certain degree of leisure, from occasional intercourse with intellectual persons, from reading, and from discussion, are at least able to distinguish an assertion from an argument; and are accustomed to refuse submission to commands not founded upon authority which themselves recognise. The class of persons here described is by no means to be despised either for numbers or information. Edmund Burke, somewhat less than twenty years ago, estimated their amount at eighty thousand; a formidable mass, and, in effect, the masters of the empire. Supposing the numbers by this period to have swelled to one hundred thousand, let the friends of the established church subtract from this aggregate papists, dissenters, and infidels: three classes consistently pledged to overthrow it. If the deduction be only fifty thousand (I should make it more,) there is still a farther defalcation in the very numerous classes of neutral churchmen; or of persons who, as supporters of the establishment, are perfectly inefficient, if not virtual conspirators with its professed enemies. Let the hierarchy then survey this immense host, and in their future acts of government regard the principle of self-preservation so far as not to commit the reputation of the church to a feeble agent. The lovers of our venerable establishment are miserably disheartened by seeing her practise the attitudes of a suicide. If her death be really desirable, she may obtain it without sacrilegiously conspiring with assassins. She had better wait, than anticipate.

I wish, in conclusion, to offer some advice, not perhaps unseasonable, to many lay members of the united church:—Do not too hastily quarrel

with the state forms of prayer, lest your devotion be lost in criticism. An ill-constructed act of devotion may be used with edification; and a poor prayer is better than none at all. You have no occasion, indeed, to call evil good; nor to prefer an occasional form to the all but inspired Liturgy of your church, or to the devout aspirations of Andrews, Patrick, and Taylor, of Baxter and Henry, Jenks and Bean. Your willingness to use imperfect forms may in the end produce the consequence of your being favoured with such prayers as will, by their spirituality and unction, elevate and invigorate your minds, and cause you to forget the ungrateful feelings formerly occasioned by sentiments and expressions which, while you could scarcely approve them, were yet made the instruments of your own and your country's welfare. In the mean time, humbly endeavour to supply the deficiencies you lament, by an increased fervour in your private devotion. Do not expect, in this world's vineyard to gather fruit from every vine. The vintage at the best is scanty. We have many, many, privileges; and if we are too querulous about matters of a secondary importance, we may forfeit or neglect what we may never repossess, nor again value. Let us beware of wandering from a scrutiny of ourselves in a prurience to detect imperfection in others; lest (when the discovery will be unavailing) we find that we have never impartially examined our individual character; but have purchased a familiarity with the moral failures of mankind at the cost of our own salvation.

MONITOR.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

It is a matter of concern to me when I observe religious persons adopting, whether deliberately or through inadvertence, modes of speaking which in their effects are likely to be pernicious. The error, I fear, is not un-

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frequent; and is in its consequences more mischievous than may be apprehended. To one instance of it I wish to call your attention, and that of your readers.

When persons of the description now termed evangelical (I use the term for the sake of intelligibility) inquire into the state of religion in a distant parish, they are sometimes heard to ask, "whether the Gospel has been preached there in the Established Church." I have known this question to be put by a clergyman respecting the parish of which he was about to undertake the charge. It is a question to which, whatever be the parish concerning which it may be proposed, and whoever may have been or may be the minister of that parish, there is but one answer to be returned:—"Unquestionably, the Gospel has been preached in the Established Church there, and up to this very moment. Wherever the Liturgy of the Church of England is the medium of public worship—a Liturgy holding prominently forth, from the beginning to the end, the grand peculiarities of Christianity, and involving, as a part of the public service, the regular reading of the Scriptures—there the Gospel is constantly and fully preached."

On the example of unwarrantable language which I have stated, the following remarks may not be irrelevant.

In the first place, such a question, or any other mode of speech analogous to it (and it may fairly be assumed that a person who propounds such a question is likely to employ at other times phraseology of the same cast) cannot but give extreme offence to numbers of the members of the Church of England who may hear of it. Be it allowed that the offence would be aggravated by prejudice; yet the ground for strong and decided disapprobation is just. Suppose a clergyman, settling in a parish, to be known to have used such language: how odious it must sound to the friends of his predecessor! How un-

pleasant and how strange to a large portion, if not to the mass, of the parishioners! What sneers would it needlessly provoke from the openly profane! What triumph would it needlessly excite in the minds of enemies of the Establishment! What secret aversion, if not open hostility, would it rouse against this clergyman, among a portion at least of his surrounding clerical brethren! What drawbacks and impediments would it cause, in a variety of ways, to the usefulness of his labours and of his example!

In the next place, such language is in the highest degree injurious to the Liturgy and to the Establishment. What is likely to be the effect on the minds of the common people, to say nothing of the higher orders, if they are impliedly given to understand that they may have been regularly attending for years the public service of the Church of England, praying her prayers, confessing in her confessions, adoring in her adorations, seeking for grace according to her instructions, looking for justification in the manner and on the basis to which she directs them, and that during all this time they have heard nothing of the Gospel? Can our imagination easily represent to us a mode in which a clergyman can more deeply wound the church of which he is a minister, or a mode in which he can add greater force to the arguments with which dissenters of different classes will labour, and on their own principles consistently, to alienate his flock from attachment to our public service, and to draw them over to new pastors?

Thirdly. Such language manifestly and powerfully tends to foster the extravagant preference, which perhaps most men, and certainly the lower orders, are disposed to give to preaching over prayer. Let me not be suspected of undervaluing preaching. I fully acknowledge and value the scriptural sacredness of the ordi-

nance. But prayer and intercession and supplication and thanksgiving constitute a scriptural ordinance also; and persons who have exercised their attention on the subject in question can scarcely fail to have perceived, that (through causes which I do not pause to state) the latter ordinance is not merely undervalued in comparison with the former; but that by multitudes it is accounted almost as nothing, unless when, by being ministered extemporaneously, it acquires interest from novelty, or from the idea that it is the result of immediate inspiration. How injudicious to encourage an error in itself of great magnitude, and obviously hostile to the pure church to which we belong!

Fourthly. Such language is calculated to raise up and to cherish pride, and pride of the darkest shade, in the persons who indulge themselves in it. If a clergyman be of the number, he is apt to enter on his ministry, not with the feelings of one who is to be the helper of the faith of his fellow Christians, but with the impressions of a teacher sent forth to evangelize a body of heathen. He is in imminent danger of regarding the attainments and the exertions of the minister who preceded him (I assume them to have been defective) as more defective and less efficacious than was actually the case; to look upon the generality of his brethren in the vicinity with a supercilious eye; and to become the narrow-minded partisan of a class in religion, instead of cherishing a catholic spirit and manifesting impartial justice towards those from some of whose opinions he may differ. And it may become a fearful question, whether, amidst his superior knowledge and more active labours as a clergyman, his spiritual pride may not be more offensive in the sight of Heaven, than even the negligence and the guilty ignorance of his predecessor.

A FRIEND TO FAIRNESS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

If the following lines will suit your purpose, they are at your service.

I am, &c.

APIS.

JERUSALEM LOST AND REGAINED.

HE dies! the Conqu'ror dies! Celestial love

With god-like warmth his bosom fires;
For man he quits the realms above,

For man he bleeds, for man expires!

Guilt, trembling, grasps the spear

That cleaves his sacred side;

The direful stroke affrighted seraphs hear,
And shriek, and deep in night their faces hide.

Forth bursts the crimson flood!

Hark! hark! with shouts that rend the sky,

Th' infuriate murd'ers wildly cry,

"On us, on us descend his vengeful blood!"

Loud howls the blast!—the frightened rocks

Yawn to their adamant base;

E'en Death his rigid grasp unlocks,

And quits his cold embrace.

His captives mark his wild despair,

And, gladly bursting from the tomb,

Regardless of their mortal doom,

Glide through the lurid air.

The blushing sun conceals his rays,

And darkness sleeps profound,

Save when the lightnings momentary blaze

Gleams through the night, and rives the trembling ground.

Beyond the skies

The shouts incessant rise,

And pierce the eternal bars of light

That guard Heaven's throne:—

E'en amidst the realms of night,

Where tortured furies groan,

The sound is heard; fell demons list'ning bend,

With wond'ring ear, to catch the infernal cry;

While Hell's terrific caves reply,

With echoes that shall never die,

"On us, on us his blood descend!"

It comes! it comes! the destined vengeance falls!

Vespasian's ruthless hand,

Impell'd by Heaven's command,

Hurls lightnings on thy desecrated walls.—

See! from imperial Rome

The blood-stain'd eagles come!

Thy virgins ravish'd fall! Thy infants bleed;

Incarnate furies urge the deed;—

Thy domes ten thousand flames surround;

Thy standards sweep the bloody ground;

Thy unwept heroes press the tomb;

And ruin endless seals thy vengeful doom!

Behold each trembling outcast fly,

To seek, beneath an unknown sky,

Some rocky cleft by torrents torn,

Some den conceal'd with ragged thorn,

His throbbing brow to hide;

With joy he hails the cave forlorn,

A refuge from the bitter scorn

Of unrelenting pride.

Ah, Salem! view the curse thy offspring bear,

Memorial of thy blood-invoking prayer;—

Unknown, unpitied, o'er the world they stray,

Where fear impels, or av'rice points the way.

Behold their pangs! in every feature trace

The stamp that insulates the guilty race;

Dejected, spurn'd, they curse the hated light,

And sink, unwept, to realms of torture and of night!

But, hark! what sounds of thrilling pleasure

Burst from seraphic harps above!

Catch! catch the soft, enchanting measure,

The chords of sympathy and love.

Wildly sweet the echoes languish

To console the breast of anguish;

Softly they float the gale along,

For mercy is the song:—

"The Conqu'ror died, the Conqu'ror rose,

Rose to demand his starry crown,

And hurl the pointed lightning down

With sacred vengeance on his foes.

But Pity, gentle guest,

T'is inmate of his breast,

Urged him the guilty race to spare;

Smiling, he heard her soft request,

Then clasp'd the outcasts to his breast,

And spent the vengeful shaft in air.

Behold, in yon celestial clime,

A lovelier Salem springs sublime!

Through Heaven's eternal age,

Unmoved, the hallow'd walls shall stand,

Nor fear the ruthless warrior's rage,

Or Time's relentless hand.

Hither, O Salem's wand'ror, come,

And claim thy long forgotten home!

No more shall torturing fiends await

Thy passage to th' infernal gate;

No more Heaven's vengeful thunders roll,

To agonize thy guilty soul;

But blooming seraphs shall expand

The portals of the promised land;

Shall sweetly calm thy parting groan,

Then waft thee to th' eternal throne,

Where, robed in never-fading charms,

Thy own Messiah smiles, and calls thee to his arms."

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IF it be not inconsistent with your plan to insert the following ode, written by Mr. J. Montgomery, I shall be much gratified by its appearance in the Christian Observer. Though originally written with a view to celebrate the Royal British System of Education, there is in the ode itself nothing which confines its application to that or any other plan for conveying instruction to the ignorant.

JOHN.

"Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding."—Prov. iv. 7.

OF all that live, and move, and breathe,
Man only rises o'er his birth;
He looks above, around, beneath;
At once the heir of heaven and earth.
Force, cunning, speed, which nature gave
The various tribes throughout her plan,
Life to enjoy, from death to save:
These are the lowest powers of man.

From strength to strength he travels on;
He leaves the lingering brute behind;
And when a few short years are gone,
He soars—a disembodied mind:
Beyond the grave, with hope sublime,
Destined a nobler course to run,
In *his* career the end of Time
Is but Eternity begun!

What guides him in his high pursuit,
Opens, illumines, cheers his way,
Discerns the immortal from the brute,
God's image from the mould of clay?
'Tis knowledge:—knowledge to the soul
Is power, and liberty, and peace;
And while celestial ages roll,
The joys of knowledge shall increase.

Hail to the glorious plan! that spreads
This light with universal beams,
And through the human desert leads
Truth's living, pure, perpetual streams.
—Behold a new creation rise,
New spirit breathed into the clod,
Where'er the voice of wisdom cries,
"Man, know thyself, and fear thy God!"

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

DRYDEN'S noble poem, the *Religio Laici*, is a two-edged weapon. Dr. Marsh has cut with one of the edges: let us try the other.

IN times o'ergrown with rust and ignorance,
A gainful trade the clergy did advance;
When want of learning kept the laymen low,
And none but priests were authorized to know;

When what small knowledge was, in them
did dwell,

And he a god who could but read and spell;
The mother-church did mightily prevail;
She parcell'd out the Bible by retail;
But still expounded what she sold or gave,
To keep it in her power to damn or save.
Scripture was scarce; and, as the market went,

Poor laymen took salvation on content,
As needy men take money good or bad;
God's word they had not, but the priest's
they had;

Yet whate'er false conveyances they made,
The lawyer still was certain to be paid.
In those dark times they learn'd their knack
so well,

That by long use they grew infallible.
At last a knowing age began to inquire,
If they the Book, or that did them inspire:
And making narrower search, they found,
though late,

That what they thought the priests' was
their estate;
Taught by the will produced, the written
word,

How long they had been cheated on record.
Then ev'ry man who saw the title fair,
Claim'd a child's part, and put in for a share:
Consulted soberly his private good,
And sav'd himself as cheap as e'er he could.

* * * * *

The unletter'd Christian, who believ'd in
gross,

Plods on to heav'n, and ne'er it at a loss:
For the strait gate would be made straiter
yet,

Were not admitted there but men of wit.
The Book's a common largess to mankind,
Not more for them than ev'ry man design'd.
The welcome news is in the letter found;
The carrier's not commission'd to expound;
It speaks itself; and what it does contain,
In all things needful to be known, is plain.

DEXTER.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

On the Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Minister. A Discourse, delivered to the Rev. James Robertson, at his Ordination over the Independent Church at Stretton, Warwickshire. By ROBERT HALL. Nottingham: Dowson: London, Button. 1812. pp. 58.

WE are always glad to enlighten our pages with the luminous sentiments of this author, who, we conclude, is known to most of our readers. Hitherto, indeed, he has been known to them chiefly as a defender of the outworks of Christianity, endued with an extraordinary share of strength and skill, as well as courage; although, even in this capacity, we discern a wide difference between our author, and many who have preceded him in the same path. His reasoning does not rest in mere speculation; and his eloquence is that of a heart deeply imbued with the principles of truth. Now, however, he appears in a somewhat different character: from defending the evidences of natural religion, and hence confirming the truth of Christianity in general, he proceeds to a more explicit statement of its leading doctrines; and after vindicating their importance, his object is to shew in what way these doctrines may be most skillfully employed in persuading men to accept the salvation revealed in the Gospel.

In this address, Mr. Hall has stated, for the instruction of the ministers of Christ in general, the "discouragements and supports" peculiar to their profession; a subject which he has treated with his usual felicity: and if he has descended nearer to the level of common minds in this than in his former publications, yet even in his lowest

descent we recognise the hand of a mighty master. If we do not see so much profound remark, yet we observe, what much better suits our own taste, more of that Christian wisdom which cannot fail to instruct, of that zeal which re-produces itself, of those peculiar doctrines on which man's eternal interests depend. And here we are glad to fortify our own views by the following pertinent observation of our author: "On practical subjects, the most common thoughts are usually the most important; and originality is the last quality we seek for in advice:" an observation which, as far as the properties of his own mind would allow him, he illustrates by his practice in this very sermon, where we observe much of what Johnson terms, and applauds, "as a voluntary descent from the dignity of science."

Our author has treated separately, the discouragements and the supports of the Christian minister. Under the head of the former, he has distinguished between those discouragements which arise from the nature of the office itself, and those which are produced by the varieties of temper, character, and situation in a congregation. Among those which arise from the nature of the office, he states: First, that the minds of men are naturally indisposed to the reception of Divine truth; secondly, that the very attempt to convince them of their guilt will frequently excite disgust; thirdly, that even when men are once properly affected with religious truth, it requires much pains to preserve them from self-delusion and error. Under the second class of discouragements, he refers generally to the different topics and modes of address necessary for the opposite characters which compose a

congregation; and the difficulty of preserving a due medium between personality on the one hand, and indiscrimination on the other, and of uniting in religious instruction the requisite degree of *seriousness* and *affection*.

The supports by which these discouragements are to be surmounted, our author thus classes. 1st, The Christian ministry is of Divine institution. 2dly, The materials of a minister's work are ready furnished to his hand, and are of a nature admirably suited to his purpose. 3dly, It is the dispensation of the Spirit. And he closes his observations on this point, by adverting to the farther encouragement which the faithful minister derives from the dignity of his profession, and the rich reward that awaits him.

Such is a hasty outline of this excellent sermon, of which it is not one of the smallest recommendations, that it embraces no point on which orthodox Christians of all denominations do not agree.

The first extract we shall give from it, will serve both to illustrate the author's view of that fundamental article of religion, original sin, and to afford a good specimen of the manner in which religious sentiments may be conveyed, in plain, and at the same time polished, language.

"The Gospel presupposes a charge of guilt; it assumes as an indubitable fact, the universal apostacy of our race, and its consequent liability to perish under the stroke of the Divine anger; nor can you acquit yourself of the imputation of handling the word of God deceitfully, if, from false delicacy, or mistaken tenderness, you neglect the frequent inculcation of this momentous truth. You will find it, however, no easy matter to fasten the charge on the conscience; which, when it seems to be admitted, will often amount to nothing more than a vague and general acknowledgment, which leaves the heart quite unaffected. To convince effectually is, indeed, the work of a superior agent." pp. 8, 9.

The next passage we shall notice is that in which the author, after stating the difficulty of preserving even those who have made some

progress in religion from the opposite extremes either of presumption or despair, wisely remarks, that the very consciousness of sin is often made an excuse for continuance in it. Strange as it may seem, it is only one of the many paradoxes which man in his present state exhibits, that the very tenderness of conscience, in minds of a peculiar stamp, is made subservient, not to its proper purpose, that of detecting and subduing whatever is wrong, but to that of cherishing a false sensibility, in which conviction is substituted for conversion, and the mere sense of our sins for victory over them. We are afraid that cases of this kind are not uncommon. There are, we believe, many persons of strong feelings and acute perceptions, whose notions of religion are tolerably correct, and who could not be satisfied without occasional and even frequent examination of their state before God, who yet live without any sensible progress in religious attainments, nay, almost without any visible abatement even of those evils of which they are conscious, and which they sometimes conscientiously deplore. The stated and special periods of prayer and self-examination recur; the mind is affected to sorrow, and even laments under strong emotions its own deficiencies and aberrations; but this very sorrow, perhaps, only serves to induce the belief that they are not forsaken of God, and almost to reconcile them to the recurrence of the same errors; under the false presumption, either that by the lustration of their tears those errors are divested of half their guilt, and may be numbered among the pardonable weaknesses of a heart in the main right with God; or that a time may come when their sorrow for those lamented evils will at length issue in that "repentance unto life which is not to be repented of," but with which these habitual deviations can now scarcely be reconciled even by

themselves. But it is time that our author should speak for himself on this point.

"The conscience, roused to a just sense of the danger to which the sinner is exposed by his violation of the laws of God, is apt to derive consolation from this very uneasiness; by which means it is possible that the alarm, which is chiefly valuable on account of its tendency to produce a consent to the overtures of the Gospel, may ultimately lull the mind into a deceitful repose. The number we fear, is not small, of those, who, though they have never experienced a saving change, are yet under no apprehensions respecting their state, merely because they can remember the time when they felt poignant convictions. Mistaking what are usually the preliminary steps to conversion, for conversion itself, they deduce from their former apprehensions an antidote against present fears; and from past prognostics of danger, an omen of their future safety. With persons of this description the flashes of a superficial joy, arising from a presumption of being already pardoned, accompanied with some slight and transient relishes of the word of God, are substituted for that new birth, and that lively trust in the Redeemer, to which the promise of salvation inseparably belongs." pp. 11, 12.

In a subsequent passage, the author, while he justly reprobates all that may be deemed personal in addresses from the pulpit, thus strongly and pointedly enforces the necessity of introducing such delineations of character as shall serve to display each man to himself.

"A loose and indiscriminate manner of applying the promises and threatenings of the Gospel, is ill-judged and pernicious; it is not possible to conceive a more effectual method of depriving the sword of the Spirit of its edge, than adopting that lax generality of representation, which leaves its hearer nothing to apply, presents no incentive to self-examination, and, besides its utter inefficiency, disgusts by the ignorance of human nature, or the disregard to its best interests, it infallibly betrays. Without descending to such a minute specification of circumstances, as shall make our addresses personal, they ought unquestionably to be characteristic, that the conscience of the audience may feel the hand of the preacher searching it, and every individual know where to class himself. The preacher who aims at doing good will endeavour, above all things, to insulate his hearers, to

place each of them apart, and render it impossible for him to escape by losing himself in the crowd. At the day of judgment, the attention excited by the surrounding scene, the strange aspect of nature, the dissolution of the elements, and the last trump, will have no other effect than to cause the reflections of the sinner to return with a more overwhelming tide on his own character, his sentence, his unchanging destiny; and, amid the innumerable millions who surround him, he will *mourn apart*. It is thus the Christian minister should endeavour to prepare the tribunal of conscience, and turn the eyes of every one of his hearers on himself." pp. 16—18.

The following just and ingenious observations on composition we recommend to the attention of all preachers of the Gospel.

"May I be permitted to remark, though it seem a digression, that in the mode of conducting our public ministrations, we are, perhaps, too formal and mechanical; that, in the distribution of the matter of our sermons, we indulge too little variety, and exposing our plan in all its parts, abate the edge of curiosity, by enabling the hearer to anticipate what we intend to advance. Why should that force which surprise gives to every emotion, derived from just and affecting sentiments, be banished from the pulpit, when it is found of such moment in every other kind of public address. I cannot but imagine the first preachers of the Gospel appeared before their audience with a more free and unfettered air, than is consistent with the narrow trammels to which, in these latter ages, discourses from the pulpit are confined. The sublime emotions with which they were fraught, would have rendered them impatient of such restrictions; nor could they suffer the impetuous stream of argument, expostulation, and pathos, to be weakened, by diverting it into the artificial reservoirs, prepared in the heads and particulars of a modern sermon. Method, we are aware, is an essential ingredient in every discourse designed for the instruction of mankind, but it ought never to force itself on the attention as an object apart; never appear to be an end, instead of an instrument; or beget a suspicion of the sentiments being introduced for the sake of the method, not the method for the sentiments. Let the experiment be tried on some of the best specimens of ancient eloquence; let an oration of Cicero or Demosthenes be stretched upon a Procrustes' bed of this sort, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, the flame and enthusiasm which have excited admiration in all ages,

will instantly evaporate: yet no one perceives a want of method in these immortal compositions, nor can any thing be conceived more remote from incoherent rhapsody." pp. 19, 20.

On this passage, however, we would remark, that, after all, it belongs, perhaps, only to a few minds of a superior description to treat a subject with perspicuity and consistency unless they are confined within the limits of prescribed divisions; and that the majority of our congregations, whose minds have scarcely escaped, if ever to escape, from the nursery of instruction, require all the aid of such leading-strings to prevent their ideas from running into confusion, and to enable them to comprehend the scope of a sermon.

On the subject of *seriousness*, as a grand requisite in preaching, the author has not only considered "jesting and undisguised levity" of any kind, as a breach of that sobriety which becomes the Christian minister, but has included under the same censure, "whatever in composition or manner is inconsistent with the supposition of the speaker being in earnest; such as sparkling ornaments, far-fetched images, and that exuberance of flowers which seems evidently designed to gratify the fancy rather than touch the heart."—We need scarcely say how much we coincide with the author, in the judgment he has expressed on this point. There can be no doubt, that levity of any kind, on an occasion so solemn as that which has for its object the salvation of the soul, cannot fail to bring into question the sincerity of the preacher. Who, for example, can believe that the ingenious South, notwithstanding the general correctness of his doctrine, the force of his arguments, and the nicety of his discriminations, could have felt a deep interest in the truths he preached, when, after attempting to prove, that devotional exercises in which the heart is not interested, are the "sacrifice of fools," he adds, "and God is never

more weary of sacrifice than when a fool is the priest, and folly the oblation." The mind which in preaching could fall into a strain like this, must view the awful realities of another world through a medium to which our sight cannot adjust itself.

Another offence, scarcely less to be condemned in ministers of the Gospel, is the useless and pedantic display of learning, which justly excites a suspicion that Christianity is viewed more as a mere exercise of the understanding, than as a system of which the main object is to save the soul from impending ruin. And it is curious to remark, with what exultation infidels have exposed defects of this kind in the injudicious advocates of the Gospel, who display not their *tenets*, but *themselves*; and have thence taken occasion to involve in one sweeping condemnation, the sincerity of the advocate, and the truth of his creed. Even Rousseau complains to this effect of the Christians of his day:—"Our libraries are full of books of divinity, and we are every where overrun with casuists. Formerly, we had saints, but no casuists. Science extends itself, and religion decays. All the world are for teaching how to act well, but nobody is willing to learn. We are, in fact, all become scholars, and have ceased to be Christians."*—And in another place he thus writes: "No, it was not by means of so much artifice and study, that the Gospel spread itself over the universe, and that its captivating beauty penetrated the hearts of men. This divine book, the only one necessary for Christians, and the most useful even to those who are not, need only to be read and reflected on, to inspire the soul with a love of its Author, and a desire to obey its precepts. Never did virtue speak in so pleasing a style; never was profound wisdom expressed with so much energy and simplicity. It is impossible to give over

* Essay on the Sciences.

reading it, without perceiving ourselves the better for it. O ye ministers of that gospel which it contains, give yourselves less trouble to instruct me in so many useless things. Throw aside all those learned volumes, which can neither convince nor affect me. Prostrate yourselves at the feet of that God of mercy whom you undertake to make me know and love; ask of him for yourselves that profound humility which you ought to preach to me. Display not to me that variety of science, that indecent pomp of learning, which dishonors you, and disgusts me. Be you affected yourselves, if you would have me so; and, above all, give me a proof in your conduct, of your practising that law in which you pretend to instruct me. You have no need of any other learning, either for yourselves, or to instruct us. Do this, and your ministry is accomplished; and that, without even the mention of the belles lettres, or of philosophy. It is thus you ought to practise and to preach the Gospel, and it was thus its first defenders caused it to triumph over all nations; not *Aristotelico more*, as the fathers said, but *piscatorio more*.*

On the part of the philosopher, this complaint was doubtless made because it suited his purpose, and furnished him with an argument in favour of his strange position, that the sciences had been injurious to the happiness of man. It is equally certain, also, that the want of learning in the ministers of Christ, could it have been detected, and had it equally suited his purpose to expose it, would have been a more certain cause of joy to his mind;—but, still, there must have been something in their addresses which gave plausibility to this charge. The truth, in fact, of that common quotation, “*Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum tibi*,” is no where more strikingly illustrated than in the case of the

Christian minister. He must first have felt his own danger, before he will urge home with the energy of self-conviction, and the eloquence of truth, their danger upon others; he must first feel his own weakness and corruption, before he can forcibly state the value of that Saviour who supplies in his own person a remedy for both; he must first be himself a partaker of that change of heart which the Gospel is intended to produce, before he can either fully explain its nature, or suitably enforce its necessity.

What our author has said to shew that Christianity is the dispensation of the Spirit (p. 34—41) is so able and so wise, so far removed from the wildness of enthusiastic conjecture, and so satisfactory as a vindication of the Divine agency, that we could wish to have given it entire: but we have already exceeded the limits usually allotted to a single sermon, and therefore must confine ourselves to a part of it, in which the author, after having asserted the freedom of the Spirit's operations, even though confined within the completed canon of Scripture; and the sufficiency of revelation, even though requiring the superadded influence of the Spirit to make it effectual on the hearts of men; subjoins the following observations:—

“Let me earnestly intreat you, by keeping close to the fountain of grace, to secure a large measure of its influence. In your private studies, and in your public performances, remember your absolute dependance on superior aid; let your conviction of this dependance become so deep and practical as to prevent your attempting any thing in your own strength, after the example of St. Paul, who, when he had occasion to advert to his labours in the Gospel, checks himself by adding, with ineffable modesty, *yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me*. From that vivid perception of truth, that full assurance of faith, which is its inseparable attendant, you will derive unspeakable advantage in addressing your hearers; a seriousness, tenderness, and majesty, will pervade your discourses, beyond what the greatest unassisted talent can command. In the choice of your subjects it will lead you to what is most solid and useful, while

* Miscellaneous Works. Vol. i p. 65.

it enables you to handle them in a manner the most efficacious and impressive. Possessed of this celestial unction, you will not be under the temptation of neglecting a plain Gospel in quest of amusing speculations, or unprofitable novelties; the most ordinary topics will open themselves with a freshness and interest, as though you had never considered them before; and *the things of the Spirit* will display their inexhaustible variety and depth. You will pierce the invisible world; you will look, so to speak, into eternity, and present the essence and core of religion, while too many preachers, for want of spiritual discernment, rest satisfied with the surface and the shell. It will not allow us to throw one grain of incense on the altar of vanity; it will make us forget ourselves so completely, as to convince our hearers we do so; and, displacing every thing else from the attention, leave nothing to be felt, or thought of, but the majesty of truth, and the realities of eternity." pp. 38, 39.

It is hardly necessary for us to add, after what we have already said, that the author has maintained throughout the character of those great talents by which his former writings have been so eminently distinguished: and in descending from the description of abstract to that of more obvious truths, he has shewn that he can be both profound and practical in his reasoning, eloquent and yet plain in his style, original and orthodox in his sentiments. We observe with sincere satisfaction his powerful mind employed in the defence of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, now indeed more the objects of attack than its evidences; and we indulge a sanguine hope of seeing him frequently engaged in the same sacred warfare.

Philosophical Essays. By DUGALD STEWART, Esq. F.R.S. Edin. &c.

(Continued from p. 606.)

MR. STEWART'S work is divided into two parts. Of the first we have given some account in our preceding number, in which our readers were conducted rapidly through a considerable part of the *frontier* of metaphysics. Like other frontiers, it is cer-

tainly debatable ground; and some of our readers may, perhaps, think it nearly as barren as such territories are apt to be. We will not dispute about this. The journey, whether tedious or agreeable, is ended. Those who thought it wearisome, should be pleased to find themselves entering upon a new country; and if any have passed through it without fatigue, they will be the less indisposed to attempt a new excursion. For ourselves, we confess that we are well pleased that Mr. Stewart has confined his remarks on the origin of our knowledge to the first half of his volume. A mind so fertile and so highly cultivated as his, is able, undoubtedly, to lend a charm to every subject; and those who peruse these essays will find (what we fear our critique would little lead them to suppose) that even the obscure and thorny path through which we have accompanied him, is, in his society, really cheerful. But then it is a little mortifying to discover, that with all its intricate meanderings it leads absolutely nowhere. The exercise, to be sure, is refreshing; but if only exercise is to be found, common sense will tell us to stop when we begin to grow fatigued.

The subjects on which Mr. Stewart has entered in the latter part of his volume, are of a description which few will think uninteresting, whatever other objections may be made to them. The first of these essays is on the Beautiful, and the second on the Sublime.

It is now somewhat more than half a century since Mr. Burke attempted to explain, on philosophical principles, the causes of that pleasure which every person of sensibility feels in the perusal of the finest writers, and in the contemplation of animate or inanimate nature. Lord Kames preceded him (we believe) a short time, with his "*Elements of Criticism*;" but from these Mr. Burke appears to have borrowed little, if any thing; and

in this country at least, he may be considered as quite original. His followers have not been very numerous, but, for the most part, they have been select: Sir Joshua Reynolds. Mr. Price, Mr. Payne Knight, and Mr. Alison, are all writers of considerable eminence.

It would be an interesting subject of inquiry, whence it happens that certain researches, both literary and philosophical, happen to be omitted (if we may use the expression) for a long series of years—though of a nature, when once investigated, to become exceedingly popular. Both the science of political economy and the science of philosophical criticism had their birth in the last century; yet poets had sung and commercial intercourse existed from the earliest ages. The ancients were passionately fond of eloquence, poetry, music, sculpture, painting; of all the arts for the enjoyment and the perfecting of which a cultivated taste is peculiarly requisite. Nay, taste is exactly the particular in which their superiority over the moderns is the least disputable. Yet their most celebrated critics (and the race was numerous and of high reputation) rarely attempt any thing beyond a delineation of the rules which are to be observed in all just compositions. The principles into which these rules may be resolved, they rarely mention, and never investigate. They resemble the preceptor of young Cyrus in the art of war, who taught him the whole system of manœuvring, but neglected to instruct him in the method of studying the characters of his soldiers, and acquiring an ascendancy over their minds.

It is not very easy to account satisfactorily for this phenomenon. Perhaps the course of sciences which different nations pursue, and the order in which they arise out of each other, depend more upon accidental circumstances, than ordinarily is supposed. If, however, we were obliged to find some probable reason for the neglect of philosophical criticism

among the ancients, we should suggest, as one of the chief causes, that peculiar delicacy of organization and fineness of natural taste with which they were generally gifted, and which would certainly be sought in vain among our own countrymen. Theophrastus was discovered, at Athens, to be a foreigner by speaking the dialect too correctly. Demosthenes was hissed in one of his earliest speeches for a false accent. Euripides shared the same fate at the theatre because he had crowded too many sigmas (σ) into a verse; and the effect was thought so comical, that Aristophanes more than once made his countrymen merry by mimicking this unhappy line. But the story told of Crassus the orator is the most singular: He was stopped by thunders of applause on pronouncing the following passage:—"Ubi libido, ibi innocentiae leve præsidium est:" a sentence, the music of which was thought overpowering; though, probably, the most delicate modern ear cannot catch a single tone of its harmony. Where the taste was naturally so fine, it is not very extraordinary that the principles on which it may be cultivated and improved were not anxiously studied; just as very rich soils are those where agriculture is generally most neglected. The common opposition of nature to art, is at least thus far founded in truth, that where the former has been remarkably bountiful the second is apt to be inactive.

Perhaps, too, some additional light will be thrown upon the fact already noticed, if we consider the exquisite feeling which was common in the ancient world for whatever is great or affecting. Of this, abundant evidence is afforded by the classical historians, to which it would be difficult to find any thing parallel in modern writers. When Manlius was arraigned for high treason, though the indignation of the people was extreme, they refused to judge him within sight of the Capitol which he had defended. When Scipio ap-

peared to answer a charge of embezzling the public money, he held up to the people the articles of accusation, and, tearing them in pieces, said:—"Romans, on this day I vanquished Hannibal: let us go and return thanks to the immortal gods;" and they followed him to the Capitol. The Greek annals are not less rich than the Latin in anecdotes of a like character; and the prodigious power of the orators, as well as the almost divine honours paid to the poets and artists, testify to the same truth. We suspect that a people capable of such lively emotions would not generally be found very patient auditors of a philosophical lecture upon their feelings. Mr. Burke doubtless is a strong example to the contrary, but Mr. Burke is an exception to all rules. Unless we have mis-read human nature, there is a certain reluctance, almost instinctive, in persons of great sensibility, to the nice dissection of their feelings. The part is too tender to be touched. There are pleasures, the analysis of which is a sort of sacrilege; and pains, on which it would be quite brutal to philosophise. Even where the imagination only is affected, it would be rather mortifying, in the midst of a glow of enthusiasm, to be informed that nothing could be more just than the emotion, a great part of it being manifestly resolvable into a perception of *fitness*, or of the *sufficient reason*.

These last ideas, which, to avoid prolixity, we have hinted rather than developed, open to us the glimpse of a theory not wholly unworthy of a more steady attention, and which tends to explain why philosophical criticism arose so late among our own countrymen. We can but just touch it, being pressed by other topics.

It is with nations as with individuals; they feel before they think. The progress of society is from fancy to reason, from sensibility to truth. The writers who flourished in this

island from the middle of the sixteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century are distinguished by an originality and extent of imagination, a copiousness of ideas, a strength of colouring, and an eager, vigorous, untaught eloquence, which we now contemplate with amazement. In respect of correctness both of thought and expression, accurate logic, and that orderly system of discussion which conducts us to truth by the shortest process, they are far inferior to their successors of the eighteenth century. Hume's *Essays* would probably surprise Barrow almost as much as Barrow's *Sermons* ought to have astonished Hume. The passions which were formerly felt and delineated, have since been surveyed and analysed. Men do not, perhaps, think more intensely in the present age, but they watch their thoughts more closely; they are more aware of the false colours which a subject may present; they are more in the habit of generalising; and have, upon the whole, a far better insight into the philosophical principles of things. Of course, we must not be understood to say that there was no philosophy in the sixteenth century, or that there was an absolute dearth of imagination in the eighteenth. We speak of the general character of each, without attempting a nice statement of proportions; and whoever will be at the pains to consider the difference between English and Irish eloquence in the present day, will see something like a living illustration and evidence of the theory which we have thus slightly sketched. The principles which explain why all this takes place, it would not be difficult to assign; but we have already wandered too far from the work before us.

The different writers who have preceded Mr. Stewart in their inquiries into the sublime and beautiful, have, with the exception at least of Mr. Alison, proceeded, pretty generally, on the supposition that

some common quality, or qualities, might be detected in all the various subjects to which the characters of beauty and sublimity are ordinarily attributed. Thus Mr. Burke thinks *smoothness* an essential property of beauty; and insists that all sublime objects will be found to carry with them something of the impression of *terror*. Mr. Price, who is a zealous advocate for Mr. Burke's theory, finding that many rough and angular objects were ordinarily counted beautiful, bethought himself of a distinction which might save the infallibility of his great master; and he constantly describes those things which, like the moss rose, fine crystals, and the like, are any thing but smooth, though universally admired, as properly picturesque;—a word so distinctive, in his opinion, of a particular class of objects, that he considers the common expression *picturesque beauty* as a solecism. Mr. Payne Knight is of opinion, that the true characteristic of sublimity is not terror, but *mental energy*. Sir Joshua Reynolds taught, "that the effect of beauty depends on habit only, the most customary form in each species of things being invariably the most beautiful." This last writer, as he denies that there is any such thing as essential beauty, cannot be said to have sought for its metaphysical principle; but then he assumes, more confidently than any of the writers above named, that there is one master key which commands the whole subject.

Mr. Stewart's two essays on the beautiful and sublime are of rather a loose texture, and by no means embrace, or profess to embrace, the whole of the subject on which they treat. It was the object of the writer to furnish only such a series of observations, illustrated in examples, as should be sufficient to develop the principle which he apprehends to afford the real explanation of the difficulties that have hitherto embarrassed this question. Mr. Stewart insists, that the writers already mentioned

have proceeded "on a mistaken view of the nature of the problem to be solved." The words *beautiful* and *sublime* he considers as applied in fact, and capable of being applied with perfect propriety, to a great number of subjects, physical, intellectual, and moral, which are essentially different from each other, which have no certain quality or set of qualities in common, nor, indeed, any general connection whatsoever; except, perhaps, that all beautiful things are agreeable, and that all sublime things are striking. His theory on this question is of a very general nature, and cannot so well be illustrated in any language as his own.

"The speculations which have given occasion to the foregoing remarks, have evidently originated in a prejudice, which has descended to modern times from the scholastic ages;—that when a word admits of a variety of significations, these different significations must all be *species* of the same *genus*; and must consequently include some essential idea common to every individual to which the generic term can be applied. In the article just quoted," (an article on the word *beau*, by Monsieur Diderot, in the French *Encyclopedie*), this prejudice is assumed as an indisputable maxim. '*Beautiful is a term which we apply to an infinite variety of things; but by whatever circumstances these may be distinguished from each other, it is certain either that we make a false application of the word, or that there exists in all of them a common quality, of which the term beautiful is the sign.*'

"The passage quoted above proceeds on a supposition, which is founded, as I shall endeavour to shew, upon a total misconception of the nature of the circumstances which in the history of language attach different meanings to the same words; and which often, by slow and insensible gradations, remove them to such a distance from their primitive or radical sense that no ingenuity can trace the successive steps of their progress. The variety of these circumstances is, in fact, so great that it is impossible to attempt a complete enumeration of them: and I shall therefore select a few of the cases in which the principle now in question appears the most obviously and indisputably to fail."

"I shall begin with supposing that the letters, A, B, C, D, E, denote a series of objects: that A possesses some one quality in common with B; B a quality in common

with C; C a quality in common with D; D a quality in common with E;—while at the same time no quality can be found which belongs in common to any *three* objects in the series. Is it not conceivable that the affinity between A and B may produce a transference of the name of the first to the second; and that, in consequence of the other affinities which connect the remaining objects together, the same name may pass in succession from B to C; from C to D; and from D to E? In this manner a common appellation will arise between A and E, though the two objects may in their nature and properties be so widely distant from each other, that no stretch of imagination can conceive how the thoughts were led from the former to the latter. The transitions, nevertheless, may have been all so easy and gradual, that, were they successfully detected by the fortunate ingenuity of a theorist, we should instantly recognise not only the verisimilitude but the truth of the conjecture;—in the same way as we admit with the confidence of intuitive conviction the certainty of the well-known etymological process which connects the Latin preposition *E*, or *Ex*, with the English substantive *stranger*, the moment that the intermediate links of the chain are submitted to our examination” pp. 214, 216, 217.

There is a plain good sense, as well as a profound philosophy, in this theory, which recommends it to the understanding as soon as it is stated; and few, probably, of Mr. Stewart's readers will peruse the passage which we have here extracted, without feeling some surprise that a truth at once so simple and so incontrovertible should have been very imperfectly understood by many of our most eminent writers. For the purpose of developing more completely the principle already stated, Mr. Stewart traces the probable progress of the term *beauty* from its earliest meaning to some of its more remote applications. It is evident that any attempt to pursue a word employed in a very extended sense through all its wanderings, directed as they must have been sometimes by accident and caprice, as well as by natural associations, must be considered rather as a specimen of what is possible, than as a history of what actually happened.

The truth of the principle does not, however, at all depend on the accuracy with which such an investigation is conducted. Mr. Stewart may be wrong in his conjecture respecting the primitive meaning of the word *Beauty*; he may be wrong in every step which he assigns of its subsequent progress: still it remains indisputable, that the word was originally applied to some one object; and it is, at the least, in a very high degree probable, that it thence travelled, in consequence of a variety of slight associations, through a vast succession of different ideas to which we find it now applied, but to which, by its application, it certainly conveyed no common principles of similarity. In saying this, we do not mean to intimate that the series of probable connections which Mr. Stewart has pointed out is open to any considerable exceptions. On the contrary, we consider them, so far as they extend, as not only ingenious, but wearing many of the characters of truth. Mr. Stewart supposes the idea of *beauty* to be first acquired from colours; that the word is thence applied to forms; and afterwards to motions. He suggests, also, many plausible and satisfactory reasons for its subsequent transference to sounds; but, though his essay supplies many other illustrations of his general principle, he does not systematically pursue the progress of this word further. He supposes the term *sublime* to have been first suggested by some of the celestial phenomena; from thence to have passed to space in its other dimensions; and gradually, through many very natural and almost universal associations, which he suggests, to have been engrafted on a variety of the most exalted moral and physical ideas.

The essay upon the Beautiful contains, besides the exposition of Mr. Stewart's doctrine upon the subject, a variety of curious and valuable remarks on the theory of Mr. Burke; on the additions proposed to be

made to it by his very ingenious pupil and advocate Mr. Price; and also on the opinions maintained by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Father Buffier. We have not room to enter upon these criticisms, which are executed with the hand of a master and the spirit of a gentleman. All the writers above named have undoubtedly fallen into considerable errors upon these subjects; but it must not thence be inferred that their labours have been altogether fruitless. The alchemists had a notion in ancient times, that there was but one great principle at the foundation of all things; and that if they could reach this, the whole mystery of material nature would be easily unravelled. Nothing, to be sure, could be more fanciful than their hypothesis; but the efforts that were made in search of this fugitive essence enriched chymistry with much of its most valuable materials. Thus it has happened also in philosophical criticism; and of all those who have gone astray in pursuit of a metaphysical quiddity, there is not one who can be considered as having wandered in vain. All have missed the object of their pursuit; but all have returned home rich with spoils, which are more than an adequate compensation for their labours and their disappointments.

The principle which Mr. Stewart has stated and illustrated in his *Essay on the Beautiful*, is one of very general application, and of great practical importance. It affects, in a greater or less degree, every part of language; and of course therefore, as language is the great instrument of thought and communication among men, it connects itself with the most considerable and the most ordinary concerns of human life. This is a fact which it is not difficult, and may perhaps be useful to establish. Take then, by way of example, a quality which all admire, and most wish to have the credit of possessing—*courage*. Who, in ancient or modern days has hesitated to applaud it? With what enthusiasm has it been

extolled by poets and orators; by warriors in the field, and statesmen in the senate! Yet the term which custom has thus consecrated, is indifferently applied to subjects of a dissimilar and even opposite complexion. Courage may be mere insensibility to danger; as when Charles the Twelfth received the French ambassador in the trenches, while the balls were tearing up the earth around them. It may be nothing better than a proud obstinacy; as in the Satan of Milton, "Courage never to submit or yield." It may be only a disguised sort of cowardice; as in many duels, and perhaps also in suicides: Condorcet poisoned himself, because he was afraid to die upon a scaffold. It may be the high blood and boiling spirit of a hero; as in the Duke of Savoy at the battle of Villafranca; and in Condé, when he threw his marshal's staff into the Austrian lines at Fribourg. It may be an effort of manly reason, in choosing the least of two dangers; as when Cæsar saved his army from destruction in Gaul, by seizing the shield and spear of a legionary, and fighting in the first ranks as a private soldier. Or, lastly, it may be the triumph of conscience and religion over the natural fear of death; as in the confessions of the saints, and "victorious agonies" of the martyrs. The same word, it is plain, is employed to denote a virtue, a vice, and an instinct, which is neither the one nor the other. To do homage, then, to every thing that is called courage, is to allow ourselves to be cheated of our understandings by a sound. Yet this imposture is neither uncommon nor unimportant. It is capable of affecting, in a wonderful manner, the daily sentiments and actions of men, so as exceedingly to disarrange the moral order of things. Thus, during several periods of the French history, the consideration in which a nobleman was held depended, in no trifling degree, on the number of duels that he had fought. And even to the present day, while courage is universally

admired and exacted in men, timidity is thought to be not only pardonable, but even graceful, in the softer sex;—a confusion of ideas that evidently has arisen out of the ambiguous meaning of the term courage; for though a high *bouillant* spirit may not be very becoming in women, a rational superiority to infirm fears, and self-possession in danger, are equally virtuous, and nearly equally valuable, in both sexes.

By means of a similar analysis it might be shewn, that a considerable number of those terms which are employed to express moral qualities, become, from the latitude and occasional inaccuracy with which they are used, the sources of practical error. *Good nature* is universally approved; yet the shades of our approbation, perhaps, are not always distinguished by a reference to the real merit of the quality which it expresses. Frequently it means only a certain unresisting facility of nature, which, though in some respects engaging, is weak and dangerous. It is occasionally used to express a general cheerfulness of temper. Sometimes it means an instinctive sweetness of disposition, which is very amiable. Sometimes it is applied to an habitual self-restraint, controuling every unkind emotion; which is more respectable, though less lovely, than the quality last mentioned. And sometimes it is confounded with that genuine Christian love, which is the noblest of virtues and best of blessings. It is impossible, in the same manner, not to be struck with the variety of meanings in which the highly important words, *Faith* and *Grace*, are used by the writers of the New Testament; though to follow these and other expressions, to which the like observation is applicable, through their different acceptations, would require a long dissertation.

It may, then, safely be stated, as a general principle in the history of language, that the identity of the

term employed to express certain ideas, by no means proves that there is a radical similarity in the ideas themselves. Because they bear the same name, it does not follow that they belong to the same family. Affinities, merely apparent or accidental, are frequently sufficient to account for their being assembled under a common appellation; so that it is impossible for us to be secure of thinking, speaking, or acting with correctness, unless we accustom ourselves to look into the nature of things, and employ the sign only to conduct us to the thing signified. We are all partially acquainted with this truth. Our ordinary intercourse with men forces it upon our attention, and we hear abundant complaints of the inaccuracy of most of those around us. But few, comparatively, are aware how deeply the foundations of error are laid in the nature of language itself; and how much diligence and attention are requisite, in order to be tolerably correct in our notions, even where there is a hearty desire to avoid deceiving, or being deceived. The truth is, that language, though an instrument so beautiful, that it is difficult not to suppose it of Divine invention, is, and always must be, essentially imperfect. Nor is this a matter which ought at all to surprise us. It is plainly a characteristic feature in the works and ways of God, that they are not understood upon a slight inspection. The truths of natural religion are so far from presenting themselves to the understanding at the first survey of the material and moral world, that it was with difficulty the most renowned masters of wisdom, in ancient days, reached a few of the more important of them. The evidences of revealed religion are open to many plausible exceptions; and its true meaning, its sublime doctrines, its spiritual precepts, its animating promises, its heavenly consolations, are to be understood only

according to the measure of sincere anxiety with which they are investigated. To the thoughtless and inattentive, the Bible is almost a sealed book. Revelation is not to be trifled with. In the providential dispensations of God in this world, the same character appears: all is contradiction and mystery to the careless inspector; to him who diligently watches, and faithfully obeys, much is unveiled. The great Author of all things sits (as the poet sublimely expresses it) "unseen, behind his own creation." And St. Paul explains to us a part of the reason for this mystery; "that we should seek the Lord; if haply we may feel after him and find him; although he be not far from any of us." Can it, then, be a matter of astonishment to find, that the great instrument afforded to us by Providence for reflection and mutual intercourse, partakes of the same nature with his other works and dispensations; and is it not our manifest duty to cultivate habits of vigilance, assiduity, and a practical love of truth, when every thing within us and around us so plainly calls for them?

The Essay on the Sublime was, Mr. Stewart informs us, with the exception of a few pages, written during a summer's residence in "a distant part of the country, where he had no opportunity of consulting books;" and he has thought it necessary to apologise to his readers for the selection of his illustrations; which he apprehends "may appear too hackneyed to be introduced into a disquisition, which it would have been desirable to enliven and adorn by examples possessing something more of the zest of novelty and variety." We certainly are not among the number of those to whom it could be necessary to address such an apology. We are particularly fond of seeing *great* men in their undress; of observing what is the train of thoughts which presents itself the most naturally to their minds; and which, among the more

Christ. Observ. No. 130.

celebrated writers, are those with whom they are most intimate. The unstudied effusions of an author present us with a far better history of his mind, and furnish a much truer indication of what are his real tastes and preferences, than his elaborate performances. Those must be incurious, indeed, who have no desire to have some acquaintance with Mr. Stewart's literary predilections; and none, we think, can be aware of the extent and variety of his acquirements, without wishing that he had more frequently indulged himself in the privilege of citing, without the fatigue of research, the passages which are most familiar to his imagination.

In the fifth chapter of this Essay, Mr. Stewart intimates an opinion, which none, doubtless, who are curious in matters of taste, will omit to notice. We say *intimates*, for his expressions are cautious; but the passages which we are about to extract seem to imply, that, in his judgment, at least as much, and perhaps rather more, of the true sublime is connected with natural objects, than with sentiments and actions which possess a moral dignity.

"Although I have attempted to shew, at some length, that there is a specific pleasure connected with the simple idea of sublimity or elevation, I am far from thinking that the impressions produced by such adjuncts as eternity or power, or even by the physical adjuncts of horizontal extent and of depth, are wholly resolvable into their association with this common and central conception. I own, however, I am of opinion, that in most cases the pleasure attached to the conception of *literal sublimity*, identified, as it comes to be, with those religious impressions which are inseparable from the human mind, is one of the chief ingredients in the complicated emotion, and that in every case it either palpably or latently contributes to the effect" p. 411.

"In confirmation of what I have stated concerning the primary or central idea of elevation, it may be farther remarked, that when we are anxious to communicate the highest possible character of sublimity to any thing we are describing, we generally contrive, somehow or other, either directly,

or by means of some strong and obvious association, to introduce the image of the heavens or of the clouds; or, in other words, of sublimity literally so called. The idea of eloquence is undoubtedly sublime in itself, being a source of the proudest and noblest species of power which the mind of one man can exercise over those of others: but how wonderfully is its sublimity increased when connected with the image of thunder; as when we speak of the thunder of Demosthenes! *Demosthenis non tam vibrarent fulmina nisi numeris contorta ferrentur.* Milton has fully availed himself of both these associations, in describing the orators of the Greek republic:

"Resistless eloquence
Wielded at will the fierce democracy;
Shook th' arsenal, and fulminated over
Greece,
To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne."
p. 413.

"In the concluding stanza of one of Gray's Odes, if the bard, after his apostrophe to Edward, had been represented as falling on his sword, or as drowning himself in a pool at the summit of the rock, the moral sublime, so far as it arises from his heroeal determination 'to conquer and to die,' would not have been in the least diminished; but how different from the complicated emotion produced by the images of altitude; of depth; of an impetuous and foaming flood; of darkness, and of eternity; all of which are crowded into the two last lines.

"He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

In the following well-known illustration of the superiority of the moral above the physical sublime, it is remarkable, that while the author exemplifies the latter only by the magnitude and momentum of dead masses, and by the immensity of space considered in general, he not only bestows on the former the interest of an historical painting, exhibiting the majestic and commanding expression of a Roman form, but lends it the adventitious aid of an allusion, in which the imagination is carried up to Jupiter armed with his bolt. In fact, it is not the two different kinds of sublimity which he has contrasted with each other, but a few of the constituents of the physical sublime, which he has compared in point of effect with the powers both of the physical and moral sublime, combined together in their joint operation:

"Look then abroad through nature, through
the range

Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
Wheeling, unshaken, through the vault immense;

And speak, oh man, does this capacious scene," &c &c p 417.

We do not give the quotation at length, for the sake of economising our space, and because it must be familiar to the recollection of all our readers.

Much of what is insisted upon by Mr. Stewart in the above extracts, is undoubtedly true. We are far from agreeing with those, who think that objects, which are only physically sublime, exercise little or no influence upon the mind; or who can discern no grandeur in the fine mountain scenery of Wales or Scotland, without the aid of Caractacus and Ossian. Such frigid travellers are either deficient in sensibility, or eat up with an affectation of being vastly more intellectual than their neighbours; which they manifestly are not, or they would be free from all such pedantry. We have no doubt, too, that in almost all sublime descriptions, the natural images which are employed to convey moral ideas, assist very materially in producing the general effect; and in such cases we admit that it is difficult to analyse the impressions, and assign to each the exact proportion of its influence. Yet, all this notwithstanding, we are persuaded that there is a difference in the nature of things between physical and moral sublimity, and that the latter possesses an essential superiority over the former. "The material part of the creation" (says a profound and eloquent writer*) "was formed for the sake of the immaterial; and of the latter the most momentous characteristic is, its moral and accountable nature, or, in other words, its capacity of virtue and vice." There is, undoubtedly, a gradation in the order of created

* Discourse on the Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Minister. By Robert Hall.

beings ; some things were made for others ; and it is a self evident proposition, that "the end must be of greater value than its means." Hooker says that "stones are in dignity of nature inferior to plants." Without attempting to settle the rights of precedence between such parties, there can be no dispute, that what is in its nature moral and everlasting *must* be of greater dignity than that which is only material and transitory. The superior excellence of the thing does not, indeed, necessarily prove that the impression which the idea of it produces shall be more sublime ; but it makes it, at the least, highly probable that it will be so. And many reasons concur for believing that the fact coincides perfectly with the presumption. The most sublime of all ideas certainly is that of the Deity ;—an idea which, to use the language of the same extraordinary writer whom we have before quoted,* "borrows splendour from all that is fair, subordinates to itself all that is great, and sits enthroned upon the riches of the universe." Now it is plain that the idea of God is entirely composed of moral qualities ; every material image being necessarily excluded. It is plain too, that as man matures in knowledge and virtue, the power which moral impressions possess will be continually increasing ; a truth which is, or ought to be, practically experienced by every man, as he advances in life. But physical objects possess in the nature of things only a fixed value. The superiority of moral over physical sublimity may also, we think, be satisfactorily inferred from the powerful influence which the higher sorts of poetry exercise upon the mind, compared with natural scenery and painting. The principal advantage of the former consists in the facility it possesses of presenting moral ideas to the imagination. In the power of placing before the

* Mr. Hall. Sermon on the effects of Infidelity.

mind the images of natural things, it is evidently greatly inferior, not only to original nature, but also to every graphical imitation of her. Nor is it any reply to this to say, that the moral images which poetry commands are superadded to its descriptive powers. Moral images are unquestionably associated also with scenery and landscapes. The difference is, that in these, natural objects are presented to the mind with great vividness, and moral ideas only faintly ; in poetry, moral ideas are powerfully portrayed, and sensible objects are drawn but indistinctly.

To bring this question as closely as may be to the test of experiment, let us take a passage, the effect of which is as great as can well be conceived of any uninspired production, and which unites in a peculiar manner images of the highest natural and moral sublimity. Take the celebrated description of Satan in the first book of the *Paradise Lost*.

Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread commander : he above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower : his form had not yet lost,
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than archangel ruined, and th' excess
Of glory obscured. As when the sun new
risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the
moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs ; darkened so, yet
shone
Above them all th' archangel : but his face
Deep scars of thunder had entrench'd, and
care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage and considerate pride
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers
rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss,) condemned
For ever now to have their lot in pain ;
Millions of spirits for his crime amerc'd
Of heaven, and from eternal splendours
flung
For his revolt ; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered ; as when heaven's
fire

Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain
 pines,
 With singed top their stately growth tho'
 bare
 Stands on the blasted heath.

In this noble description, Milton has collected some of the most sublime images which the sensible world supplies;—a tower; the sun new risen; the sun in eclipse; and the oak and pine blasted with the lightning. All these are thrown together to swell the dignity of the scene; and in the midst stands the awful figure of the archangel himself. But it is the figure of the archangel "*ruined*;" and that single word is so powerful that it almost effaces, alone, every other impression. The moral sublimity of the ideas which accompany it; the despair, the cruelty, the feeling, the sufferings of Satan; the unshaken fidelity and irrevocable misery of his followers; is altogether so great, that the natural images, lofty as they are, seem to us to borrow all their grandeur from the associations which attend them. We should have little fear in trusting by far the largest portion of the more celebrated passages in the great poets to the same experimental test.

Indeed, it appears to us to be far less questionable whether that which is morally sublime be essentially superior to that which is naturally sublime, than whether the rule which prevails in this instance hold true also with respect to the beautiful. It may be doubted if there are not some forms of visible beauty so enchanting that no image of moral excellence would be capable of producing at once an equal effect. Dr. Akenside, however, does not admit even of this doubt;

Is aught so fair
 In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,
 In the bright eye of Hesper or the Morn;
 In nature's fairest forms is aught so fair,
 As virtuous friendship; as the candid blush
 Of him who strives with fortune to be just;
 The graceful tear that streams for others'
 woes;

Or the mild majesty of private life?

The poet, perhaps, is right; at least, we are not disposed to enter

the lists against him. We incline, however, to think, that the expression of the beautiful in the works of nature is, if we may so speak, more characteristic and complete than the expression of the sublime. The eye reposes with unwearied delight on the landscapes of Claude; but the sketches of Salvator owe much to the imagination of the beholder;—a fact of which that master was doubtless sensible, when he threw in the wild *farouche* figures which appear in his Alpine scenery, and which were evidently intended to assist the fancy in her conception of what is terrible. The explanation of this is probably to be found in the effect of colours.—It is a little curious that Mr. Stewart, who seems disposed to contend for the superior effect of the physical over the moral sublime, declares it to be his opinion that female beauty (which he describes to be "the master-piece of nature's handy work,") owes its powers of enchantment rather to the moral associations with which it is surrounded by the young admirer, than to the charms of form and colour.

We cannot leave this subject without observing, that any theory respecting the beautiful which professes to explain our agreeable impressions by the principle of associations alone, must be radically erroneous. It involves (as Mr. Stewart has justly and acutely remarked) a manifest absurdity. Unless some perceptions be supposed which are originally pleasing, there is nothing on which the associating principle can act. There can be no accumulation without a capital. Objects there are, then, undoubtedly, which derive their agreeable effect from the "original adaptation of the human frame to the external universe." But we are disposed to contend for a great deal more than this. We think there is a similar adaptation of truth to our intellectual faculties, and of virtue to our moral feelings. We do not deny, nor for a moment doubt, the disturbance and deprava-

tion of both, which our nature has suffered in the fall of our first parents. There is enough of obscurity in the understanding, and of corruption in the heart, to overpower, without the special grace of God exciting and aiding our own unrenitting endeavours, whatever is good and tending to perfection in either. Yet surely it is true that the mind has naturally a thirst for knowledge; and that generosity, benevolence, disinterestedness, fortitude, are beheld with general approbation. Indolence, or a love of pleasure, may be so powerful as to prevent us from making a progress in the pursuit of truth. Selfishness, and the indulgence of evil passions, will soon choke up the springs of every good and noble affection. But unless we suppose some tendency towards perfection to be still inherent in our nature, some traces of our original greatness, some lineaments of our divine origin, how shall we explain the preference which has been shewn in all ages for those actions which tend to the general good, over those which have for their object the advancement of an individual? How shall we explain the efforts made by so many wise and great men in ancient times, to disperse the darkness around them, and penetrate into that purer region, where they might contemplate the true images of God and virtue? How shall we explain that noble aphorism of the old philosophy, that "vice is more contrary to the nature of man, than pain, and sickness, and death, and all the evils which can besiege mortality?" Certainly it was not intended to assert that man is, in the common sense of the words, naturally virtuous. The whole world supplied but too sad and convincing evidence to the contrary. What was intended must evidently have been this, that virtue is the proper perfection of man's moral nature; that vice is destructive of the soul, as disease and death are of the body; and that (the soul being far more excellent and per-

manent than the body) whatever is fatal to the former, is more truly *contrary to his nature* than those things which assail only the latter:—a truth so momentous, and, in the opinion of Bishop Butler (surely no mean judge), so manifest, that it has been adopted by that profound writer as the simplest practical basis of all ethical science.*

There are two other Essays in this volume which still remain to be considered. The first of these is upon *Taste*; the second on the *Culture of certain Intellectual Habits*.

What is Taste? This is a question which has a good deal divided the literary and philosophical world. Dr. Blair defines it to be "a power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature and of art." Dr. Aken-side expresses nearly the same idea in verse:

What then is taste, but these internal powers,
Active and strong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse.

According to both these writers, taste is nearly, or exactly, synonymous with sensibility. Mr. Burke objected, long ago, to these and similar definitions; and Mr. Stewart has satisfactorily shewn that they are erroneous. Taste and sensibility are certainly not conceived to be synonymous terms in the common apprehensions of mankind. Sensibility is often possessed, even to excess, by persons who are very deficient in taste. And those exercises which, from the constitution of our nature, have a tendency rather to impair the former, are continually enlarging and perfecting the latter.

Mr. Stewart's account of this power is to the following effect. In objects presented to the mind, an indefinite variety of circumstances may concur in producing that agreeable impression to which we give the name of Beauty. Yet the impression, as far as our consciousness can judge of it, is simple

* See the Introduction to Butler's Sermons.

and uncompounded. It is impossible, then, for the most acute sensibility, united with the greatest sagacity, to say, upon a single experiment, what are the circumstances in the supposed object, to which we are chiefly indebted for the agreeable impression produced; what those, if any, that may be considered as neutral; and what those which tend to diminish and injure the general effect. It is only by watching attentively a great variety of experiments upon different things, that we can arrive at that discriminating knowledge which enables us to separate, in every impression, those circumstances which have been favourable to the general result from those which have been injurious to it. This power of discrimination we call Taste. It supposes, of necessity, some sensibility to pleasure and pain; but it is formed to the perfection in which we see it often possessed, chiefly by diligence in multiplying, and accuracy in watching, those intellectual experiments from whence the materials, which inform and exercise it, are supplied.

This account of the nature and formation of taste, appears to us to be, in the main, sufficiently correct. It ought, however, to be accompanied with an observation, which is much too obvious to have escaped Mr. Stewart's notice, but with which he has not expressly qualified his theory. Although taste is originally formed by a process, such as has been described, yet, in a polite age, a very large proportion of the principles adopted by those who have cultivated it with the greatest success, are not derived from experiments actually made, but are received upon the authority of earlier masters, and, at the most, are only verified by the personal experience of those who embrace them.

The view which Sir Joshua Reynolds long since took of this subject, accords very nearly with that which Mr. Stewart has more fully opened.

"The real substance" (he observes) "of

what goes under the name of Taste, is fixed and established in the nature of things. There are certain and regular courses by which the imagination and the passions of men are affected; and the knowledge of these causes is acquired by a laborious and diligent investigation of nature, and by the same slow progress as wisdom or knowledge of every kind, however instantaneous its operations may appear when thus acquired."

Perhaps the process by which taste is originally formed, may be rendered more intelligible by considering how any one acquires what is called a perfect ear in music. Suppose a concerto of Mozart, or of Corelli, to be performed: some natural sensibility to the beauty of musical sounds being supposed (as it is found in fact to exist in a great majority of instances), the general impression which is made upon the hearer will be gratifying. But upon a single experiment, probably no person entirely unpractised in music, could say more than that he received, on the whole, considerable pleasure. Suppose the same piece to be frequently repeated: he will perceive that he receives different degrees of pleasure, and pleasures also of different kinds, from distinct parts of the piece. Let the same person hear a great variety of other musical compositions; and if he is vigilant in observing his impressions, and compares the parts of the several pieces which afford him the greatest or the least gratification, he will gradually acquire considerable correctness and delicacy in perceiving the excellences and the blemishes of the various passages to which he listens. Then comes the musical *philosopher* (Rameau would doubtless claim this dignity for his favourite science), and explains many of the causes of those perceptions which the *amateur* has experienced. He tells him, that in such a part his ear was offended by the introduction of too many discords into the harmony; that in another it was wearied by too monotonous a system of concords; that here the cadences are finely managed (explaining the principle);

there the transition into a different key is too sudden; and he talks learnedly to him about sharp sevenths and fundamental basses. If the amateur has the fortune to have a tolerable head as well as an ear, he understands a good deal of what is taught to him, and finds that by the help of this new knowledge the experiments which he makes are much more profitable than they had been; that is, he observes many slight impressions which had before escaped him, and has a more perfect knowledge of those which he had already noticed. His judgment also receives great assistance from the opinions which he hears from others who have made a progress in his art, and from the rules adopted or favoured by the most celebrated masters, and thus, by degrees, with nothing but an ordinarily good ear and a plain understanding to begin with, may any person become a very skilful connoisseur in every species of musical composition, and acquire so critical a nicety in his perception of sounds as to be able to detect a single false note in the midst of the most noisy and complicated performance. The process by which taste is acquired in any of the sister arts, certainly is not very different.

If the account which has been given of the manner in which our taste is formed, be tolerably correct, it follows that justness and comprehension of understanding are more indispensably requisite for the enjoyment of that power in great perfection, than a superior delicacy in our original perceptions. Madame de Stahl appears to have caught a glimpse of this truth, when she says of the hero of one of her works that the extent of his understanding enabled him to act with propriety into whatever circle of society he was introduced. Indeed, Mr. Stewart has pushed his theory so far as to insist, that great natural sensibility is unfavourable to the formation of a good taste. Instances illustrative of this opinion will

probably crowd upon the recollection of our readers; and as it is favourable to mediocrity, there is danger of its becoming very popular. It is proper, therefore, to state, that the disadvantages to which persons of great natural sensibility are said to be subjected in respect of taste, is exactly of the same kind with the difficulties which oppose perfection in every other department. Persons who have been blessed with fine parts are sometimes deficient in judgment; but it is not because they possess distinguished faculties, but because they abuse them. All taste has its origin in sensibility; but exquisite sensibility requires to be controuled in matters of taste, as in every thing else, by a vigilance and intelligence proportioned to its vivacity.

The Essay on Taste is divided into four chapters, of which only the two first are employed in the analysis of that power;—the two latter chapters are filled with miscellaneous observations nearly connected with the same subject. At the close of the second chapter, Mr. Stewart expresses an intention of resuming the subject on some future occasion, for the purpose of illustrating that “progress of taste from rudeness to refinement which accompanies the advancement of social civilization.” We trust he will find opportunity to fulfil the expectations which such a hope awakens.

It is not possible for us to present our readers with all the valuable truths and suggestions which Mr. Stewart has collected in his two latter chapters upon taste; but the following passage deserves to be extracted, as well on account of the dignity and justness of the sentiments which it expresses, as of the peculiar felicity of the diction.

“Corresponding to the distinction which I have been attempting to illustrate between universal and arbitrary beauties, there are two different modifications of taste; modifications which are not *always* united (perhaps *seldom* united) in the same person. The one enables a writer or an artist to rise

superior to the times in which he lives, and emboldens him to trust his reputation to the suffrages of the human race, and of the ages which are yet to come. The other is the foundation of that humbler, though more profitable sagacity, which teaches the possessor how to suit his manufactures to the market; to judge before-hand of the reception which any new production is to meet with, and to regulate his exertions accordingly. The one must be cultivated by the habits of abstraction and study, which by withdrawing the thoughts from the unmeaning particularities of individual perception, and the capricious drapery of conventional manners, familiarize the mind to the general forms of beautiful nature; or to beauties which the classical genius of antiquity has copied from these, and which, like these, are unfading and immortal. The proper sphere of the other, is such a capital as London or Paris. It is there that the judges are to be found from whose decision it acknowledges no appeal; and it is in such a situation alone that it can be cultivated with advantage. Dr. Johnson has well described (in a prologue spoken by Garrick, when he first opened the theatre at Drury-lane,) the trifling solitudes and the ever-varying attentions to which those are doomed, who submit thus to be the ministers and slaves of public folly:—

Hard is *his* fate, who here by fortune plac'd
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste;
With every meteor of caprice must play,
And catch the new-blown bubbles of the day.

The ground-work of this last species of taste (if it deserves the name) is a certain *facility of association*, acquired by early and constant intercourse with society; more particularly with those classes of society who are looked up to as supreme legislators in matters of fashion; a habit of mind, the tendency of which is to render the sense of the beautiful (as well as the sense of what is right and wrong) easily susceptible of modification from the contagion of example. It is a habit by no means inconsistent with a certain degree of original sensibility; nay, it requires, perhaps, some original sensibility as its basis: but this sensibility, in consequence of the habit which it has itself contributed to establish, soon becomes transient and useless; losing all connection with reason and the moral principles, and alive only to such impressions as fashion recognises and sanctions. The other species of taste, founded on the study of universal beauty (and which, for the sake of distinction, I shall call *philosophical taste*,) implies a sensibility deep and permanent to those objects of affection, admiration, and

reverence, which interested the youthful heart, while yet a stranger to the opinions and ways of the world. Its most distinguishing characteristics, accordingly, are strong domestic and local attachments, accompanied with that enthusiastic love of nature, simplicity, and truth, which, in every department both of art and science, is the best and surest presage of genius. It is this sensibility that gives rise to the habits of attentive observation by which such a taste can alone be formed; and it is this also that, binding and perpetuating the associations which such a taste supposes, fortifies the mind against the fleeting caprices which the votaries of fashion watch and obey." pp. 470, 471.

The essential inferiority of *arbitrary* to *universal* associations, in all works of taste, is sufficiently established by the concurrent suffrages of mankind. Numberless illustrations of this fact present themselves, the instant it is stated, to every person who is at all conversant with the literary productions of different ages. But perhaps a more remarkable instance of its truth could hardly be found than is supplied by the writings of Shakspeare and Ben Jonson. The latter of these had at one time so nearly superceded his master in the general favour, that Dryden, in his Essay on Dramatic Poetry, considers himself as exposed to a charge of presumption in venturing to claim even an *equality* for his beloved Shakspeare; and he seems to have thought it necessary to accompany the expression of so bold a judgment with an extravagant encomium on the *Silent Woman* of Jonson, which has probably seduced many an unhappy reader into a perusal of that very ordinary performance. Time, however, has reversed the judgments of fashion; the caprices of an age of pedantry are past, and truth and nature have resumed their legitimate authority.

It must not be supposed that all arbitrary associations are equally frivolous. Some of them are of far greater value than others; and there are two classes among them which may be said even to partake of universality. Mr. Stewart has named

them; 1. *Classical Associations*; and 2. *National or Local Associations*. Of the power which the first of these possess, under the direction of a skillful hand, no one who is fully sensible of the beauties of Milton's poetry can be ignorant. Mr. Burke's works abound in similar allusions. The following, among numberless others, has always struck us as exquisitely beautiful:—speaking of the wars of 1796-7, in Italy, he names the Mincio, “*who now hides his head in his reeds, and leads his slow and melancholy windings along banks wasted by the barbarians of Gaul.*” The power of classical associations is probably felt much more strongly by men than by women, in consequence of the different courses of education pursued by them. We are persuaded also, that the pleasure felt by many who delight in references to the ancient writers, arises less from a keen relish for their beauties than from those fond recollections of the days of youth, and hope, and gayety, with which they are insensibly accompanied. The effect of national and local associations, though limited in its extent, is so considerable within its own sphere, and allies itself so powerfully to some of the best affections of our nature, that it would be an unpardonable cruelty to attempt to diminish their influence. The emotions to which a feeling heart is peculiarly sensible are surely among the most genuine elements of poetry:

He dreamed on Alpine heights of Athol's
hill,
And heard in Ebro's roar his Lynedoch's
lovely rill.

It is justly observed by Mr. Stewart, that the cultivation of a fine taste not only enables us to enjoy more perfectly those *primary pleasures* which its appropriate objects afford, but superadds to these a *secondary pleasure* peculiar to itself and of no inconsiderable value. This arises from a perception of the skill and taste as well as the genius which is exhibited

ed in a performance. Both statuary and painting are greatly indebted to this circumstance for the applauses they receive. The finer touches of the chissel and pencil, which an ordinary eye wholly overlooks, are beheld with rapture by those who have cultivated the arts. Even in poetry how much of the admiration so justly paid to Virgil, Tasso, Boileau, and Pope, may be resolved into the same principle. Indeed, the pleasure which attends the contemplation of whatever is perfect, or which nearly approaches to perfection, seems peculiarly to belong to a being who is, or ought to be, in a state of continual progression. Nothing, perhaps, is so distinctive of a really superior character, as a just and lively perception of excellence wherever it is to be found.

The topic last mentioned leads Mr. Stewart to notice those technical rules which critics in different ages, from Aristotle to Bossu, have laboured to establish for the direction of authors. To these he does not attach any great value; and we concur with him in that opinion. They may save little men from committing great extravagances, but are seldom much regarded by bolder minds; like crutches, which support the weak, and are an incumbrance to the strong. After making a few observations on what he calls a technical correctness of taste, Mr. Stewart proceeds in the following manner. The extract we are about to make is long; but it will give to our readers a better opportunity of observing his general style of composition than we have yet afforded them, and the observations which it contains are interesting and valuable.

“There is another species of taste (unquestionably of a higher order than the technical taste we have been now considering) which is insensibly acquired by a diligent and habitual study of the most approved and consecrated standards of excellence; and which, in pronouncing its critical judgments, is secretly and often unconsciously guided by an idolatrous comparison of what it sees with the works of

its favourite masters. This, I think, approaches nearly to what La Bruyere calls *le gout de comparaison*. It is that kind of taste which commonly belongs to the *connoisseur* in painting; and to which something analogous may be remarked in all the other fine arts.

"A person possessed of this sort of taste, if he should be surpassed in the correctness of his judgment by the technical critic, is much more likely to recognise the beauties of a new work, by their resemblance to those which are familiar to his memory; or if he should himself attempt the task of execution, and possesses powers equal to that task, he may possibly, without any clear conception of his own merits, rival the original he has been accustomed to admire. It was said by an ancient critic, that in reading Seneca it was impossible not to wish that he had written 'with the taste of another person, though with his own genius'—*suo ingenio alieno judicio*;—and we find, in fact, that many who have failed as original writers, have seemed to surpass themselves, when they attempted to imitate. Warburton has remarked, and, in my opinion, with some truth, that Burke himself never wrote so well as when he imitated Bolingbroke. If, on other occasions, he soared higher than in his *Vindication of Natural Society*, he has certainly no where else (I speak at present merely of the *style* of his composition) sustained himself so long upon a steady wing. I do not, however, agree with Warburton in thinking, that this implied any defect in Mr. Burke's genius, connected with that faculty of *imitation* which he so eminently possessed. The defect lay in his taste, which, when left to itself, without the guidance of an acknowledged standard of excellence, appears not only to have been warped by some peculiar notions concerning the art of writing; but to have been too wavering and versatile, to keep his imagination and his fancy (stimulated, as they were, by an ostentation of his intellectual riches, and by an ambition of Asiatic ornament) under due controul. With the composition of Bolingbroke present to his thoughts, he has shewn with what ease he could equal its most finished beauties; while, on more than one occasion, a consciousness of his own strength has led him to display his superiority, by brandishing, in his sport, still heavier weapons than his master was able to wield.

"To one or other of these two classes, the taste of most professed critics will be found to belong; and it is evident, that they both exist where there is little or no sensibility to beauty. That genuine and

native taste, the origin and growth of which I attempted to describe in the last chapter, is perhaps one of the rarest acquisitions of the human mind: nor will this appear surprising to those who consider with attention the combination of original qualities which it implies; the accidental nature of many of the circumstances which must conspire to afford due opportunities for its improvement; and the persevering habits of discriminating observation by which it is formed. It occurs, indeed, in its most perfect state, as seldom as originality of genius: and when united with industry, and with moderate powers of execution, it will go farther in such an age as the present, to secure success in the arts with which it is conversant, than the utmost fertility of invention, where the taste is unformed or perverted.

"With respect to this *native or indigenous* taste, it is particularly worthy of observation, that it is always more strongly disposed to the enjoyment of *beauties* than to the detection of *blemishes*. It is, indeed, by a quick and lively perception of the former, accompanied with a spirit of candour and indulgence towards the latter, that its existence, in the mind of any individual is most unequivocally marked. It is this perception which can alone evince that sensibility of temperament, of which a certain portion, although it does not of itself constitute taste, is, nevertheless, the just and most essential element in its composition; while it evinces, at the same time, those habits of critical observation and cool reflection, which, allowing no impression, how slight soever, to pass unnoticed, seem to awaken a new sense of beauty, and to create that delicacy of feeling which they only disclose. We are told of Saunderson, the blind mathematician, that in a series of Roman medals, he could distinguish by his hand the true from the counterfeit, with a more unerring discrimination than the eye of a professed virtuoso; and we are assured by his biographer, Mr. Colson, that when he was present at the astronomical observations, in the garden of his college, he was accustomed to remark every cloud that passed over the sun. The effect of the blindness of this extraordinary person was not surely to produce any organical change in his other perceptive powers. It served only to quicken his attention to those slighter perceptions of touch, which are overlooked by men to whom they convey no useful information. The case, I conceive, to be perfectly analogous in matters which fall under the cognizance of intellectual taste. Where nature has denied all sensibility to beauty,

no study or instruction can supply the defect; but it may be possible, nevertheless, by awakening the attention to things neglected before, to develop a latent sensibility where none was suspected to exist. In all men, indeed without exception, whether their natural sensibility be strong or weak, it is by such habits of attention alone to the finer feelings of their own minds, that the power of taste can acquire all the delicacy of which it is susceptible.

"While this cultivated sensibility enlarges so widely to the man who possesses it the pleasures of taste, it has a tendency, wherever it is gratified and delighted in a high degree, to avert his critical eye from blemishes and imperfections;—not because he is unable to remark them, but because he can appreciate the merits by which they are redeemed, and loves to enjoy the beauties in which they are lost. A taste thus awake to the beautiful, seizes eagerly on every touch of genius with the sympathy of kindred affection; and in the secret consciousness of a congenial inspiration, shares, in some measure, the triumph of the artist. The faults which have escaped him, it views with the partiality of friendship; and willingly abandons the censorial office to those who exult in the errors of superior minds, as their appropriate and easy prey.

"Nor is this indulgent spirit towards the works of others, at all inconsistent with the most rigid severity in an author towards his own. On the contrary, both are the natural consequences of that discriminating power of taste, on which I have already enlarged as one of its most important characteristics. Where men of little discernment attend only to general effects, confounding beauties and blemishes, flowers and weeds, in one gross and undistinguishing perception, a man of quick sensibility and cultivated judgment, detaches, in a moment, the one from the other; rejects, in imagination, whatever is offensive in the prospect; and enjoys, without alloy, whatever is fitted to please. His taste, in the mean time, is refined and confirmed by the exercise: and, while it multiplies the sources of his gratification, in proportion to the latent charms which it detects, becomes itself, as the arbiter and guide of his own genius, more scrupulous and inflexible than before.

"The tragedy of Douglas' (says Gray, in one of his letters) 'has infinite faults; but there is one scene (that between Matilda and the old peasant) so masterly, that it strikes me blind to all the defects of the piece.' These, I apprehend, are the natural impressions of genuine taste in pronouncing

on the merits of works of genuine excellence; impressions, however, which they who are conscious of them have not always the courage either to indulge or to avow.—Such, also, was the feeling which dictated the memorable precept of La Bruyere, of which I will not impair the force by attempting a translation: 'Quand une lecture vous élève l'esprit, et qu'elle vous inspire des sentimens nobles et courageux, ne cherchez pas une autre regle pour juger de l'ouvrage; il est bon, et fait de main de l'ouvrier.'—How different both sentiments from that fastidiousness of taste, by an affectation of which, it is usual for little minds to court the reputation of superior refinement!

"In producing, however, this fastidiousness, whether affected or real, various moral causes—such as jealousy, rivalry, personal dislike, or the spleen of conscious inferiority—may conspire with the intellectual defects which have been mentioned: nay, the same moral causes may be conceived to be so powerful in their influence, as to produce this unfortunate effect, in spite of every intellectual gift which nature and education can bestow. It is observed by Shenstone, that 'good taste and good-nature are inseparably united;' and although the observation is by no means true, when thus stated as an unqualified proposition, it will be found to have a sufficient foundation in fact, to deserve the attention of those who have a pleasure in studying the varieties of human character. One thing is certain, that as an habitual deficiency in good humour is sufficient to warp the decisions of the soundest taste, so the taste of an individual, in proportion as it appears to be free from capricious biases, affords a strong presumption that the temper is unsuspecting, open, and generous. As the habits besides which contribute spontaneously to the formation of taste, all originate in the desire of intellectual gratification, this power, where it is possessed in an eminent degree, may be regarded as a symptom of that general disposition to be pleased and happy, in which the essence of good-nature consists. 'In those vernal seasons of the year' (says Milton in one of the finest sentences of his prose writings,) 'when the air is soft and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against nature, not to go out and see her riches, and partake of her rejoicings with heaven and earth.' Such is the temper of mind, by which, in our early years, those habits which form the ground-work of taste are most likely to be formed; and such precisely is the temper which, in our intercourse with our

fellow-creatures, disposes us, both for their sakes and for our own, to view their actions and characters on the fairest side. I need scarcely add, in confirmation of some remarks formerly made, that the same temper, when transferred from the observation of nature to the study of the fine arts, can scarcely fail to incline the taste more strongly to the side of admiration than of censure." pp. 481—488.

There is a great deal of moral instruction, as well as of just critical observation, contained in the passages which we have here extracted. Reviewers perhaps, of all men, need most to be reminded of the intimate union which exists between good taste and good nature. We hope to be able to recollect this truth ourselves; and we earnestly recommend it to the attention of all other journalists.

Mr. Stewart's fourth Essay, on "the Culture of certain intellectual Habits connected with the first Elements of Taste," though considerably shorter than those which precede it, is by no means less valuable in proportion to its length; but this article has already grown to a size, which makes it impossible for us to enter into a full examination of its contents. Two opinions, however, which are here advanced, well deserved to be mentioned. Mr. Stewart insists, at some length, that the powers of the imagination, instead of diminishing while we advance in life, become stronger and stronger as the judgment improves, and as our knowledge becomes more extensive. Sir Joshua Reynolds has in like manner ridiculed, as a contemptible prejudice, the common idea, that "imagination begins to grow dim in advanced age, smothered and deadened by too much judgment." And Dr. Johnson, in his preface to Shakspeare, has expressed an opinion in substance exceedingly similar. These authorities are great, and the theory which they maintain is exceedingly pleasing. Cicero ventures even further, insisting in the person of Cato, that the

decay of memory in old age is only the consequence of inactivity. We feel a little embarrassed with this question. There is a great deal of very plausible reasoning, which may be urged in favour of Mr. Stewart's opinion; but we could marshal a melancholy array of facts in opposition to it. The truth seems to be, that there is nothing in the constitution of our nature which prevents the imagination from acquiring force year after year, in proportion to the activity with which it is exerted, and the accumulation of riches which may minister to its expense. But, in a busy community certainly, and perhaps in every state of society, the habits of life are so exceedingly unfavourable to the improvement of the more elevated and creative faculties of the mind, that the ordinary opinion upon the subject, though resting upon an unphilosophical foundation, is, for practical purposes, sufficiently correct. Some, however, there are in every age, who triumph over the obstacles which our present imperfect condition opposes to the improvement of our intellectual powers; and where the principles of our nature, and the examples of its best patterns, concur to shew, that the disadvantages with which we have to contend are not insuperable, surely it is both wise and manly to exert our best energies to overcome them.

The other opinion to which we have alluded is so original, and so exceedingly important, with a view to the education of young persons, that we shall make no apology for giving it in Mr. Stewart's own words. It occupies the two last pages of his work.

"Imagination herself furnishes the most effectual of all remedies against those errors of which she was in the first instance the cause. In proportion to the number and diversity of the objects to which she turns her attention, the dangers are diminished which are apt to arise from her illusions when they are suffered always to run in the same channel; and in this manner, while the

sources of enjoyment become more copious and varied, the concomitant pains and inconveniences disappear.

"This conclusion coincides with a remark in that chapter of the Philosophy of the Human Mind which relates to the imagination,—that by a frequent and habitual exercise of this faculty, we at once cherish its vigour, and bring it more and more under our command. 'As we can withdraw the attention at pleasure from objects of sense, and transport ourselves into a world of our own, so, when we wish to moderate our enthusiasm, we can dismiss the objects of imagination, and return to our ordinary perceptions and occupations. But in a mind to which these intellectual visions are not familiar, and which borrows them completely from the genius of another, imagination, when once excited, becomes perfectly ungovernable, and produces something like a temporary insanity.'—'Hence I have added the wonderful effects of popular eloquence on the lower orders; effects which are much more remarkable than what it produces on men of education'.

"In the history of imagination, nothing appears to me more interesting than the fact stated in the foregoing passage; suggesting plainly this practical lesson, that the early and systematical culture of this faculty, while it is indispensably necessary to its future strength and activity, is the most effectual of all expedients for subduing it, in the more serious concerns of life, to the supremacy of our rational powers. And, in truth, I apprehend it will be found, that by accustoming it in childhood to a frequent change of its object (one set of illusions being continually suffered to efface the impressions of another), the understanding may be more successfully invigorated than by any precepts addressed directly to itself; and the terrors of the nursery, where they have unfortunately overclouded the infant mind, gradually and insensibly dispelled in the first dawning of reason. The *momentary belief* with which the visions of imagination are always accompanied, and upon which many of its pleasures depend, will continue unshaken; while that *permanent or habitual belief*, which they are apt to produce, where it gains the ascendant over our nobler principles, will vanish for ever." pp. 534, 535.

The views here suggested by Mr. Stewart, are, we believe, considerably at variance with the practice of many pious and most respectable persons in this country, who think a far more cautious system than that which he

recommends expedient in the institution of youthful minds. It deserves, however, to be seriously considered, whether the ordinary practice has not been established upon contracted and erroneous views of human nature; and whether it does not, in effect, augment the evil which it proposes to correct. We beg, however, not to be understood as expressing at present an opinion upon this subject. It is our intention, when a convenient opportunity shall offer, to examine it more at large. In the mean time, we think it but just to say, that Mr. Stewart's experience and authority, in concurrence with the reasoning contained in our last extract, entitle his suggestions to the serious and impartial attention of every person who is placed in the relation of a parent or preceptor.

We have now brought our general survey of this work to a close; and Mr. Stewart cannot himself be more sensible than we are of the imperfect justice that has been rendered to him.

It is impossible to retrace in thought the subjects discussed in this valuable volume, and the great variety of striking remarks, apt illustrations, and original authorities, which are employed to dignify and embellish every dissertation, without being impressed with a profound respect for the talents and acquirements of the writer. Men seldom perform better than when they have occasion to defend themselves; and perhaps the resources of Mr. Stewart's mind are in no part of this work displayed to more advantage, than in the second Preliminary Dissertation, which contains a Reply to the Strictures of the Edinburgh Reviewers. Among the Essays, we think that on the Philological Speculations of Mr. Tooke, and the two last, on Taste and certain intellectual Habits connected with it, are the most valuable.

Of Mr. Stewart's philosophical powers and attainments, it is difficult to speak too highly. Few men have

ever brought to any science a mind so comprehensive, so accurate, and so perfectly free from all prejudice of system or authority. His acquaintance with the metaphysical writers of different countries, is probably more extensive than that of any other man in the present age, or in those which are past. His literary acquirements are also very considerable, both in our own and in the French languages. With the latter he appears to be more familiar than we could have expected in one, whose life has been principally employed in abstract researches. We recollect, indeed, no modern work which shews a more general insight into French literature; and there are parts which indicate a critical acquaintance with the language. To the Italian writers he rarely refers; but it would be rash to conclude from thence, that he is imperfectly acquainted with the productions of that country, for nothing is more characteristic of the writings of this great man, than an entire absence of all ostentation, and a certain air of simplicity, which is equally philosophical, pleasing, and instructive.

No man is better entitled than Mr. Stewart to speak with authority on the subject of English composition. He is, like all fine writers, a *purist*. Yet, instead of affecting that extreme nicety in the selection of words and phrases, for which some of the Scotch writers are remarkable, and which gives to their works the air of compositions in a foreign language, we find him boldly and freely adopting the use of *mixed metaphors*; which he insists it is childish to reject, where custom has consecrated them, "merely on account of the inconsistencies which a philosophical analysis may point out between their primitive import and their popular acceptance." There is, perhaps, no part of composition, in which a finer *tact* is requisite, than in the use of expressions which involve an obvious incongruity, but which, for want of

convenient substitutes, have been sanctioned by the authority of our best models. Nothing, certainly, is more discreditable to a man's understanding, than that ill-assorted and confused medley of ideas with which the fancy is harassed in the more flowery passages of bad writers. Yet we entirely agree with Mr. Stewart, that there is an opposite pedantry, which has of late become very common, in affecting to write more correctly than Swift and Dryden; and we are persuaded, that a man might as well expect to ride gracefully by studying the equilibrium of forces, as to compose finely merely by consulting the lights of etymology.

In the Essay on Mr. Tooke's speculations, there is a good deal of delicate criticism on the true import of certain English words. We recollect only a single instance in which we differ from Mr. Stewart. The word *interval*, he insists, can only be correctly used with reference to time: surely it is not inaccurate to say, that at the battle of Belgrade, Eugene was nearly defeated from a considerable *interval* being left between the right wing and the centre.

Our readers will probably be pleased to know something of the opinions which Mr. Stewart expresses of different writers. We think he indicates (as it was natural to expect) a clear preference of Dr. Reid before all other metaphysicians. Berkley's genius he admires; but he rejects his principal theory. Of Locke he speaks more coldly. He does not appear to estimate highly the metaphysical pretensions of Mr. Hume or of Mr. Horne Tooke; and Hartley, Priestley, and Darwin are treated with very little respect. Among the French metaphysicians, De Gerando seems to be Mr. Stewart's favourite, and after him D'Alembert. Of the writings of Kant and his followers, he professes to know little, and does not appear to think himself likely

to obtain any new lights in the science of mind by knowing more.

Mr. Stewart invariably speaks of Lord Bacon with the most profound reverence. His praise of both Burke and Johnson is high, but by no means unqualified. The modern poets whom he quotes the most frequently, are Milton, Gray, Akenside, and the Abbé de Lisle.

Those who are acquainted with Mr. Stewart's former writings, will not need to be informed, that his style is remarkable for clearness, elegance, and comprehension. We think him, on the whole, the finest writer that Scotland has produced, and the first *philosophical* writer in the English language. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a style more admirably adapted to his subject than Mr. Stewart's. The present volume exhibits more instances of haste in its composition than his former metaphysical work; and its texture is more loose, both in the order of the arguments, and the structure of the sentences. In the latter parts, too, it is rather more ornate. As a specimen of fine writing, it is perhaps less perfect; but we do not think it less elegant or less agreeable.

It would be an injustice to Mr. Stewart, as well as very little satisfactory to our feelings, were we to dismiss this volume without saying a few words on its religious and moral character. The subjects treated in it, evidently do not allow of a frequent reference to such topics: but they are never avoided where the train of observation approaches to them, and never touched but with the reverence which is justly their due. In the Essay on Sublimity, Mr. Stewart introduces several quotations from the sacred writings as illustrations of his theory; and he frequently refers, in the language of unaffected veneration, to that awful Being, who is the centre of whatever is truly sublime and excellent. In the more metaphysical parts of

his work, we find him strenuously combating, and even scornfully rejecting, the dangerous theories of the materialists, the artful insinuations of Mr. Tooke, and the plausible and licentious scepticism of Hume. Nor do we recollect to have met with a single passage in the whole volume, which can favour a dangerous illusion, or leave behind it an impression unfavourable to the best interests of virtue and religion.

On the whole, we lay down this volume with sentiments of the sincerest respect for the writer. It indicates, in every page, a mind studious of truth; unwearied in its pursuit; alive to simple, innocent, and rational gratifications; serene, cheerful, and candid; free from the vanity of authorship; and far more desirous to acquire and communicate knowledge, than to obtain a brilliant reputation. Indeed, Mr. Stewart's acknowledged superiority may well excuse him from feeling much anxiety respecting his fame. Yet it is among the first praises that can be bestowed upon a writer, that he is uniformly more occupied with his subject than with himself. To this Mr. Stewart is unquestionably entitled. He is entitled also to a still higher eulogy; that, amid all the varied topics and multiplied opinions which he has touched, he evinces an unfailing anxiety to discover and establish whatever is true and valuable, without ever indulging his fancy in starting ingenious theories, or wasting his powers upon shewy and unprofitable speculations. It is this simplicity of purpose which, beyond all other qualities, entitles him, in our estimation, to the character of a great writer; it is this (to use his own language) which properly belongs to and is alone consistent with "that unclouded reason, that unperverted sensibility, and that unconquerable candour, which mark a comprehensive, an upright, and an elevated mind."

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, &c. &c.

GREAT BRITAIN.

IN the press: Sir Philip Warwick's *Memoirs of the Reign of Charles I.* continued to the Restoration, in 1 vol. 8vo. with Notes;—A History of the House of Commons and Boroughs of the United Kingdom, by Mr. Oldfield;—A small impression, with a new Preface, of "A spiritual and most precious Perle, teaching all Men to love and embrace the Crosse, as a most swete and necessarye Thyng," &c. by Edward Duke of Somerset, Uncle to Kyng Edward VI. first printed in 1550;—The first volume of a Series of Poems, by Miss Mitford, on the Female Character in the various Relations of Life;—Armaged-

den, a Poem, in twelve books, by Mr. G. Townsend, of Trinity College, Cambridge; A Translation of Michaelis on the Mosaic Law, by the Rev. A. Smith;—Sermons by the late Rev. W. B. Kirwan, Dean of Kil-lala, with a Sketch of his Life, in 2 vols. 8vo.;—Nine original Sermons, by the late Dr. Watts, edited by Dr. P. Smith, of Homerton;—The Life and select Sermons of Mr. A. Morus, Minister of Charenton;—and, a new edition of the Remains of the late Rev. Richard Cecil, handsomely printed in foolscap 8vo. with a Portrait, and the view of Mr. Cecil's Character, by the Editor, prefixed.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THEOLOGY.

A Sermon on the Sanctification of the Lord's Day; by the Rev. James Rudge, A. B. Curate and Lecturer of Limehouse 1s.

A Sermon on the death of John Brent, Esq; by John Evans, A. M. 1s.

Treatise on the Fourth Chapter of Daniel, with some Remarks on the Person of Jesus Christ; by J. Hunt. 4s.

Calvinism Unmasked; being an Answer to Mr. Tucker's "Predestination calmly considered," by J. Brocas 12mo. 3s. 6d.

A Charge, delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Lincoln, in May, June, and July, 1812; by Bishop Tomline 2s. 6d.

Considerations on the Life and Death of Abel; on the Life and Translation of Enoch; and on the Life of Noah; by George Horne, D. D. late Lord Bishop of Norwich. Royal 18mo. 2s. sewed.

A New Directory for Non-conformist Churches; containing free Remarks on their Mode of Public Worship, and a Plan for the Improvement of it; with occasional Notes on various Topics of general Interest to Protestant Dissenters. 8vo. 5s.

Sermons: by the Rev. J. Grant, M. A. of St. John's College, Oxford; formerly Minister of Latchford, Cheshire; and late Curate of the Parishes of St. Pancras and Hornsey, Middlesex. In 1 vol. 8vo. 10s. 6d. boards.

Lectures upon Portions of the Old Testament: intended to illustrate Jewish History and Scripture Charactes; by George Hill, D. D. F. R. S. E. 8vo. 12s. boards.

A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon, at the primary Visitation, on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of May, 1812; by T. F. Middleton, D. D. 2s. 6d.

The first Homily of the United Church of England and Ireland; being a fruitful Exhortation to the Reading and Knowledge of Holy Scripture. 4s. 6d. per hundred.

A Vindication of the eternal Law and everlasting Gospel. In two Parts; by John Beach, Pastor of a Church of Christ in Bury, Suffolk. 12mo. 3s. 6d. in boards.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The History of the Waldenses; connected with a Sketch of the Christian Church from the Birth of Christ to the eighteenth Century; by William Jones. 8vo. 12s.; a few copies on fine paper, 15s.

The New Picture of Edinburgh; being an accurate Guide to the City and Environs. 18mo. 5s.

The 4th Volume of a Complete System of Ancient and Modern Geography; by James Playfair, D. D. This volume contains Germany, Poland, Prussia, Græcia, and Turkey in Europe; with seven large sheet maps. 4to. 2l. 2s.

A Compendious System of Modern Geography, Historical, Physical, Political, and Descriptive. Illustrated by eighteen maps, accurately engraved; by Thomas Myers, A. M. 8vo. 12s.

A Translation of the Record called Domesday; by Mr. Bawdwin. 4to. 21s.

Porsoni Adversaria, Notæ et Emendationes, ed. a J. H. Monk, A. M. et C. J. Bromfield, A. M. 8vo. 25s.; royal 8vo. 3l. 3s.

The Edinburgh Annual Register for 1810. 2 vols. 8vo. 24s.

An Address of Members of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States to their Constituents, on the subject of the War with Great Britain. 2s.

The new Art of Memory; founded upon the Principles taught by M. Gregor Von Feinagle, with some account of the Principal systems of artificial Memory. 12mo. 12s.

The Complete Weather Guide, a Collection of Practical Observations; by Joseph Taylor. 6s. boards.

Count Rumford's 17th and 18th Essays; the first on the source of the Light which

is manifested in the Combustion of inflammable bodies. 1s.—The other on the excellent Qualities of Coffee, and the art of making it in the highest perfection. 4s.

Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, a Poem, with Hymns and other Pieces; by Samuel Elsdale, Clerk, M. A. late Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. 5s.

Tales; by G. Crabbe. 8vo. 12s.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

MISSION SOCIETY TO AFRICA AND THE EAST.

WE have hitherto been prevented by the press of matter from inserting, as we wished and intended, an abstract of the last Report of this Society; and we are induced once more to postpone it, in order to give place to information of more immediate interest, as connected with the prosperity of this institution, than the mere detail of its past operations. We allude to a paper which has been transmitted to us by the Committee of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, containing "a Plan of *Church Missionary Associations*," calculated "to awaken the zeal of their fellow members of the church, and to call it most effectually into action." Such associations are recommended to be formed not only in large towns, comprehending several parishes, but also in separate parishes; and in some cases, where parishes comprise several congregations, in separate congregations; and even, where such an arrangement happens to be the most convenient, by means of the voluntary union of friends. In this manner persons willing to assist the Society, from the domestic circle to the largest town, may unite for a purpose beneficial to themselves, and at the same time expressive of a regard to the glory of God and the salvation of men, and of a sense of their own obligations to the Divine mercy.

The principal objects of such associations would be, 1st, To promote a missionary spirit, by circulating missionary intelligence, calculated to excite and maintain a spirit of prayer for the success of the Gospel; to awaken and diffuse a holy zeal for the support of missions, and to call forth a supply of useful labourers; and, 2dly, To augment the funds of the society, by means of congregational collections (a mode of raising money which, while it is very productive, is at the same time little felt); by

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means of benefactions and annual subscriptions from such as are able thus to contribute; and by weekly contributions from those who, though they cannot give of their abundance, are nevertheless willing to testify their zeal for God's glory to the utmost of their power. The number of contributors in this rank of life will abundantly recompense the smallness of their individual contributions: the universal establishment of such a method of contributing, both to Bible and Missionary Societies, will most essentially aid their funds, while it will foster some of the best feelings of the heart. The method of collecting weekly contributions, which has been recommended in the case of Bible Associations, will be found perfectly applicable to the present subject.

When it is considered that forty-eight weekly contributions, of one penny each, will furnish to the society the sum of 10*l.* 8*s.* per annum; and that for 10*l.* the society's Missionaries can redeem a poor African child from slavery, have him under their own control, and place him under Christian instruction during all the years of his boyhood and youth; and when it is further considered, that 24 such weekly contributions will supply annually 5*l.* 4*s.* to the fund, which will enable the Missionaries to maintain and educate one of such redeemed or other African children—surely every man will be able to realize to himself how beneficial his exertions to procure such contributions may be in the concerns of the society.

It will be a great advantage attending the general establishment of Church Missionary Associations, that the Parent Society will be relieved, in proportion to their number and activity, from the anxious care of maintaining and augmenting its funds; and will not be checked and restrained, as it has often been, from enlarging its views,

for want of means: and it will hereby be enabled to direct its chief attention to the establishment and support of missions wherever Divine Providence may open the way.

A Missionary Society takes on itself a serious responsibility in sending Missionaries abroad. It cannot, like the Bible Society, relieve itself, in case of any failure of funds, by suspending its entire expenditure: nay it cannot even, for a considerable time, diminish its average outgoings: for the Missionary Society has committed itself in the support of all the stations to which it has sent missionaries, and to the unavoidable expenses connected with those stations, and all the missionaries and their families attached thereto.

The "Society for Missions to Africa and the East" has not hesitated to seize every opportunity of attaining its objects, to which Divine Providence appeared to call its exertions; assured that the public benevolence would keep pace with its prospects of usefulness and success. Seven Lutheran ministers, five lay settlers, six English students, eight wives of missionaries or settlers, and about one hundred and twenty African children, are dependent on the society. The nett income in the year ending 31st March, 1812, was about 2400*l.* while its actual expenditure, and the debts incurred for that year, amounted to upwards of 3000*l.* The exertions made by the Committee, this year, in preparing for a new settlement, and in the addition of laymen to the establishment, must trench still further on the small capital of the Society; which is bound, by the 27th regulation, to preserve a funded property equal in amount to the subscriptions of the existing members for life.

It is evident, therefore, that great exertions are requisite to meet the present demands on the society; and that still greater will be needed to enable the Committee to enter fully into all the designs which are before it.

In the support of this great cause Christians are now invited, in the name of their Lord, to unite with those who are endeavouring to remove the reproach of negligence from their country. The honour of our Divine Master demands it at our hands. To us the bread of life has been liberally dealt: let us learn to impart a portion of that bread to our perishing neighbours.

On all the members of the Established Church, the Committee wish to press this consideration. That this is the only society in that Church, which has for its exclusive object the evangelizing of the heathen

world. Societies in England, in Scotland, in various parts of America, and in other places, are all pursuing the same grand design of proclaiming this Gospel among the heathen. But there existed, before the formation of this society, no association of members of the Established Church, with the exclusive object of contributing to the evangelization of the heathen world. As a church—the pillar and ground of the Protestant faith—we have been too justly reproached with want of zeal for the diffusion of Christianity. The Church of Rome, with whatever mixture of secular motives, has done more to make known the name of Christ among the heathen than all the professors of the Reformed Faith: and, of all the nations professing that faith, Great Britain has laboured far less in this great cause, in proportion to her means and opportunities, than any other state. While, therefore, other bodies of Christians among us are strenuously exerting themselves to remove this reproach from our land, let the United Church of England and Ireland assume that share in these exertions which becomes her. It was with the view of associating her members in this holy work, that the present institution was formed.

There is no need here for unholy rivalry. The wide world is before us. There is more than room for all the efforts which the various bodies of Christians in Europe, in America, and in the East, may be able to make for ages to come: five or six hundred millions of Pagans and Mahometans in Asia, and one hundred millions (if not double that number) in Africa, are perishing for lack of knowledge.

While the providence of God has weakened the Church of Rome, made her tremble for her own existence, shut her up from making any efforts even to maintain the missions she had established, and suffered her professed children to alienate to their own ambitious schemes the revenues by which those efforts were supported; yet, in the mean while, in the Protestant Church, of the United Empire in particular, a holy zeal has been kindled for the salvation of the heathen. The patient labours of the Society for promoting Christian knowledge, of the Society for propagating the Gospel, and of the Church of the United Brethren, begin now to receive somewhat of their reward, in the applause and imitation of the Christian world. An earnest desire to diffuse the knowledge of the Scriptures has pervaded every part of the Empire, is discovered throughout the continent itself, wherever

the Christian mind is left at liberty to express its feelings, and animates both the Western and Eastern World.

The field of labour is most ample: the prospects of usefulness are great: and the call on Christians in general, and particularly on members of the Church, is now made with a confident expectation that it will be felt and answered. Let every man give, as he is able, to all such institutions as aim with simplicity at the same great object. It cannot be expected that the conversion of the world will be effected, but by the simultaneous efforts of various bodies of Christians: yet Christians may be allowed to support, and in truth they ought to support, most strenuously, the efforts of that body to which they have, of deliberate choice and settled conviction, attached themselves.

Sermons, preparatory to the formation of Church Missionary Associations, are recommended as the most effectual method of awakening the attention of a town, parish, or congregation, and of interesting the feelings of the members of the Church on this subject. And wherever a desire may be felt of forming parochial or other associations, in conformity with the plan of which we have given merely an abstract, the secretary of the society will furnish any further information, and will supply such papers as may be required.

Donations and subscriptions will be received by the Treasurer, H. Thornton, Esq. M. P. Bartholomew Lane; by the Secretary, Rev. J. Pratt, Doughty Street; by the Deputy Secretary, Mr. T. Smith, No. 19, Little Moorfields; by the Booksellers, Mr. L. B. Seeley, 169, Fleet Street, and Mr. J. Hatchard, Piccadilly; and by Messrs. Down, Thornton, Free, and Down, Bartholomew Lane; Hoares, Fleet Street; and Ransom, Morland, and Co. Pall Mall.

On Monday the 12th instant, a special General Meeting of the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, was held at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, for the purpose of addressing and dismissing to their labours the Rev. Leopold Butscher, one of the Society's missionaries, on his return to Africa, accompanied by eight other persons, in order to strengthen and extend the society's missions on the western coast of that continent. The President, the Right

Hon. Lord Gambier, was in the chair; and there were present between three and four hundred persons. The Secretary, the Rev. Josiah Pratt, delivered the instructions of the Committee to the Missionary and his companions; and the Rev. Henry Budd, Chairman of the Committee of Correspondence, addressed them on the subject of their duties and encouragements. Mr. Butscher, who has been six years in Africa, has become well acquainted with the character of the natives, and appears to have gained the confidence of the chiefs, replied to these addresses in a spirit of simplicity and prudent but determined zeal, which greatly impressed the meeting. Two settlements have been formed on the Rio Pongas; and a third, named Gambier, after the Noble President of the Society, is about to be formed on the Rio Dembia. Mr. Butscher takes out with him three laymen, who, it is hoped, will contribute to the success of the mission by advancing the civilization of the natives through the exercise among them of various useful arts, with which they are acquainted.

The meeting was addressed by the Secretary, the Rev. H. Budd, the Rev. D. Wilson, the Rev. Dr. Smith, and the Rev. J. W. Cunningham: and much interest appeared to be excited by the prospects opening before the Society. Seven Lutheran ministers, five lay settlers, six English students, eight wives of missionaries and settlers, and about 120 African children, are dependent, as has been already observed, on the society. The income of the society fell short of its expenditure, last year, by the sum of 600*l*.; and being wholly inadequate to the exertions which are now making, the noble president added liberally to his former ample contributions to the funds; and, as many persons present have regretted that they were not invited at the meeting to follow his lordship's example, it is hoped that they, and others, will fulfil their kind intentions, by sending their contributions or subscriptions to one or other of the places mentioned above.

It was likewise announced, that the "Plan of Church Missionary Associations," of which some account has been given, was about to be extensively acted upon; and that associations were about to be formed at Bristol, and in various other parts of the kingdom.

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

SPAIN.

THE Marquis of Wellington, after taking possession of Madrid and establishing the authority of the Cortez in that capital, deemed it expedient to return northward, in order to prevent the remains of Marmont's army from again assuming an offensive attitude, either in consequence of the renewal of its equipments, or of the arrival of reinforcements from France. Leaving a great part of his own army, therefore, at Madrid and its neighbourhood, he proceeded to take the command of a body of troops which he had ordered to be collected at Arevalo: and advancing thence in pursuit of the enemy, on the 6th of September he took possession of Valladolid, which the French had just abandoned. He continued to follow them till the 17th, when he drove them to the heights close to Burgos. They retired through that town during the night, and took up a position about ten leagues to the northward of it; the main body of their army afterwards retiring to Miranda on the Ebro. The castle at Burgos had been very strongly fortified, and a garrison was left in it of 2500 men. Lord Wellington, deeming its capture essential, immediately commenced the siege of this fortress. On the 19th he carried by assault the horn-work constructed on the hill of St. Michael, which has a considerable command over some of the works of the castle. This operation cost the allies no less than 400 men in killed and wounded. An unsuccessful attempt to storm the exterior lines of the castle, on the 22d, cost them a farther loss, in killed and wounded, of 350 men. These lines, however, have since been carried, though with an additional loss of 230 killed and wounded. Some spirited sallies have since been made by the garrison, which have retarded the siege; but no doubt was entertained of the speedy fall of the castle.

General Hill was at Toledo on the 23d of September. Soult at that time had quitted Granada, with the view of effecting a junction with Suchet in Valencia. He was followed by the army of Ballasteros. General Maitland remained at Alicante, where he was making every effort to strengthen his position. Gen. Elio, who had succeeded to the command of the army formerly under O'Donnell, had taken Consuegra, a place about twenty leagues south of Toledo, by capitulation.

WAR IN THE NORTH.

On the 7th of September a general battle took place at a village called Borodino, on the road from Smolensk to Moscow, between the armies of Russia and France. The conflict was of the most furious and sanguinary description; and it seems probable, from a comparison of the somewhat contradictory reports which have been received from both the combatants, that the loss in killed and wounded on each side did not fall much short of 40,000 men. The fury of the contest, and the carnage which attended it, are said to have exceeded even the experience of Prussian Eylau. The Russians appear to have remained masters of the bloody field, but they did not find themselves in a condition to maintain it beyond a day or two, or to act offensively against the French. Prince Kutusoff, who commanded on the occasion, deemed it expedient even to abandon the defence of Moscow, which city the French entered on 14th September. Considerable resistance appears to have been made by the armed inhabitants, probably more with the view of giving time for the completion of the catastrophe which was to lay Moscow in the dust, than in the hope of effectually arresting the progress of the French. Pains are said to have been taken to remove from the city all the stores and other valuables which could be conveyed away; and few inhabitants were allowed to remain in it except those who could be employed in its defence. No sooner was it ascertained that the French would certainly gain possession of this ancient capital of all the Russias, than the flames began to ascend in every direction, and this immense city was involved in one general conflagration. The Kremlin, a large castle surrounded by a high wall, appears to have been strangely saved amidst the surrounding flames. Bonaparte, who is evidently anxious to have it understood that at least a sufficient number of houses to lodge his troops, and a sufficient quantity of stores and provisions for their comfort and subsistence, have been rescued from the general destruction, thus describes the scene:—"Five-sixths of the houses were built of wood; the fire spread with a prodigious rapidity; it was an ocean of flame: churches, of which there were 1600; above 1000 palaces; immense magazines; nearly all have fallen a prey to the flames. The fires sub-

sided on the 19th and 20 ; three quarters of the city are burned ; not above a quarter of the houses remain." This account is indeed tremendous ; and the more so as it comes from the mouth of the very man who has gone forth commissioned to destroy, and as it marks by its tone his familiarity with the work of destruction. We may applaud the unbending spirit of the people which thus involved their own large and magnificent capital in flames ; but can we help deploring the fatal necessity which suggested, and perhaps justified, so desperate an expedient ? We may deduce from it ground of consolation and hope with respect to the issue of this mighty conflict ; but can we hide from our view the intermediate misery which must accompany such sweeping desolations. Let us endeavour to realise the scene which Moscow must have exhibited on this occasion. Let us suppose the necessity suddenly to arise for applying the lighted torch to every quarter of the immense city which now fills our view, and loads the earth for many a mile ; and that after three days it could be said of that city, as of Moscow, in the emphatic language of the French Emperor—"London is no more." Let us imagine to ourselves, if we can, the multitudinous and complicated forms of wretchedness which those three days must have produced. Let us summon before us the decrepitude of age and the helplessness of infancy ; the wild agonies of parental apprehension ; the languor of disease ; the throes of labour prematurely hastened in a thousand instances, and arresting the fugitive in the very midst of flame ; to say nothing of the universal terror and consternation, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, fatigue and depression, which would be experienced at the time, and of the innumerable changes from affluence to beggary, which, on the most favourable supposition, must follow such an event ; and the mind can hardly feign to itself a tale of greater horrors. Such a tale, however, is no more than the history of what Moscow has within the last six weeks been fated to feel ; Moscow, which seemed to have been far removed from the possible approach of such a calamity ; and which a few years since we should have thought still less likely to be visited with it than London itself. Let us be grateful for our past immunity from such appalling visitations ; but let us at the same time contemplate their possibility, and study by penitence and prayer to avert their infliction.

But what has been the effect of this dreadful sacrifice ? The effect, we trust,

has on the whole, as far at least as the issue of the war is in question, been beneficial. Bonaparte has indeed possessed himself of the ground on which stood what once was Moscow ; but we doubt whether, in its present state, it will even afford him shelter for his troops from the inclemency of a Russian winter. By his own admission he has failed to find there the supplies on which he had calculated, and which, in his address to his soldiers before the battle of Borodino, he declared to be *necessary* to them. His words were, "Victory is *necessary* to us ; it will give us plenty, good quarters for the winter, and a speedy return to your country." He has been evidently disappointed in the two first of these objects ; and the accounts which have last reached us from Russia, afford some ground to doubt the accomplishment of the last. While Bonaparte was occupied in taking possession of Moscow, the main Russian army, under Kutusoff, took up a position about four or five leagues south of Moscow. Another large army was posted about the same distance to the north of that city ; and the advanced parties of both these armies continued so effectually to scour and command the intermediate circuit of the city, that the French had not, down to the 28th of September, ventured above a few miles in any direction. Whatever French parties had been met, had been driven in, or cut in pieces. Several French detachments, and convoys of ordnance and ordnance stores, and other supplies for the army, had been taken on the Smolensko road, and in other quarters. On the Dwina, Count Wittgenstein had been successful in several rencounters ; and an expedition from Riga had taken possession of Mittau on the 30th of September. A powerful Russian force is stated, by Lord Cathcart, to be assembling to the westward, of which the late Moldavian army will form a part. The different Russian armies have also been reinforced, and the Emperor is said to have ordered a farther levy of 400,000 men. Every offer on the part of Bonaparte to negotiate has been rejected ; and the zeal of all ranks in the cause of their country is said to have been heightened as the danger has increased.

If we may receive this statement as correct in its full extent, and there seems no reason to question its correctness, the prospect is certainly far from discouraging, especially as Bonaparte will find, in no long time, a new and untried enemy to contend with, in the severity of a Russian winter, which, independently of all its many disadvantages, must render the provisioning or

reinforcing* of his army in its present situation almost impossible. We wait with some anxiety the events which the next two months are likely to develop.

The much-talked-of Swedish expedition has not yet been put in motion; and probably will not till the spring returns. Peace has been proclaimed between Great Britain and Sweden.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The campaign of the American army, under General Hull, in Upper Canada, has closed as might have been expected from the nature of its early movements. On the 16th of August, the whole of it, amounting to 2500 men, surrendered as prisoners of war to a force consisting of a few British regulars, a body of Canadian militia, and some Indian allies, the aggregate of which did not amount to more than 1500 men, supported, however, by a small naval force. Fort Detroit surrendered at the same time, with twenty-five pieces of ordnance. This service was achieved, with hardly any loss, chiefly by means of the judicious disposition of the British force, which was so posted as to cut off the enemy's supplies, and to reduce him to the necessity of surrendering almost without firing a gun. The satisfaction arising from this bloodless victory was greatly damped by intelligence, which was received on the same day, of the capture of one of our frigates, the *Guerriere*, Capt. Dacres, by the American frigate *Constitution*, Capt. Hull. The superiority of the latter, both in men and metal, was very considerable; but still the contest might have terminated very differently, had not the *Guerriere's* mizen-mast been shot away in an early stage of it, which rendered the vessel unmanageable. The other two masts afterwards went over the side; and the *Guerriere* was so mere a wreck when she surrendered, that the captors, unable to carry her into port, set fire to her.

These are the only warlike occurrences which deserve to be mentioned, excepting that the American privateers have been very active, and also successful, in their depredations on our commerce. The Americans talk of renewing the invasion of Canada with an army of 30,000 men, and wiping out, even before the present season of action shall terminate, the disgrace they have sus-

tained by the capture of General Hull. But this we apprehend to be almost impossible, in the present state of the American army and its equipments; so that we may regard Canada as secure for some time to come. In the mean time, we trust that the American Government will be induced to listen to reasonable terms of accommodation; so that before the return of spring, the necessity for any further hostile movements may be obviated. The difficulties which they experience in carrying on the war; and its unpopularity in that part of the Union, the co-operation of which would be the most essential to its successful prosecution, we mean the northern States, we hope may come in aid of other and still more powerful reasons for the adjustment of the existing differences between the two countries. At the same time we must confess, that we can perceive no symptom of any such peaceful disposition in the present government of the United States; so that, unless the approaching election shall produce a change of the president, we fear that probabilities are against an accommodation.

In the northern States, the general sentiment appears to run very strongly against the policy of the war, and some energetic remonstrances on the subject have been addressed to the government. The New England States have refused to obey an order, requiring their militia to march beyond the limits of their respective territories; and they justify this refusal by a reference to the fundamental laws of the Union. They deprecate the war especially as leading to French alliance; and some of them have even gone so far as to declare, that they will have no participation whatever in measures which tend to unite their counsels with those of Bonaparte, or to link their fortunes with those of the military despotism of France; and that, under whatever pretended character the troops of that nation may approach their shores, they will receive them as enemies.

We are happy to find that sir John Borlase Warren, who is appointed to the naval command on the American station, is armed with full powers to treat with the American Government for the restoration of peace. We are glad of this, as marking the anxiety of our Government to neglect no means in their power for putting a period to the calamities of war. At the same time we ought to bear in mind, that concession may be carried too far, particularly as we have to deal with a government, which, instead of duly estimating the motives to concession, appears

* A new conscription has been ordered in France of 140,000 men, to be taken from among the men born between the 1st January and 31st December 1793.

to ascribe it to fear, and manifests a disposition to swell the extravagance of its pretensions in proportion to our willingness to recede from our just rights.

War has been declared, and letters of marque and reprisal issued, by our Government against America.

GREAT BRITAIN.

Parliament was dissolved on the 29th of September. The greatest part of the elections has since been concluded—in general, without any of those tumultuous proceedings which we apprehended might occur. Even in the open and more populous boroughs, the stream of popularity does not appear to have run vehemently in favour of the more democratic candidates. Considerable pains were taken to inflame the public mind, by the most exaggerated and insidious statements of parliamentary corruption; and a long advertisement of Sir Francis Burdett, which seems intended to give the tone to his party, and to furnish them with convenient topics of declamation at such a crisis, appeared a few days after the dissolution, which we cannot but consider as libellous, in the proper sense of that word, as being both injurious and untrue.

The first article in the long indictment, which Sir Francis Burdett presents against the late Parliament, is, the alleged fact, that Lord Arden is in the possession of a sinecure office, the emoluments of which amount to 38,500*l.* a year, and which would maintain many poor families. Now, supposing this statement to be true, which it is not, in what respect, we would ask, is the late Parliament to blame for the existence of such an abuse? The patent office held by Lord Arden, that of Register of the Admiralty, has existed for centuries; he himself was possessed of it many years before the late Parliament had an existence; and the profits of it have arisen from a cause that could not well have been anticipated, viz. the state of war in which this country has been placed for the last twenty years. One would imagine, that the late Parliament had created this place; or at least had improvidently bestowed it anew, when it might have regulated or suppressed it. No such thing: nay, it was this *corrupt* Parliament which brought the facts of the case to light; which, with a view to the regulation or suppression of such offices, whenever there should be a fair opportunity, forced Lord Arden to disclose to the public the nature and extent of his emoluments. It is by means of the discoveries made by that very Parliament, and published to the world, with a view to economical reform, that Sir F. has acquired his knowledge of Lord

Arden's place, which he now converts into an engine for degrading Parliament in the eyes of the nation. There is a singular dexterity in thus snatching from Parliament the very weapons of its defence, and employing them for its destruction.

But Sir Francis Burdett roundly affirms, that the emoluments of Lord Arden's office amount to 38,500*l.* This he learns from a Report of the late House of Commons. But mark the sequel! The very same Report, nay, almost the same line of that Report, makes a deduction from this gross sum, of 25,000*l.* for the expenses of his office, viz. for the numerous clerks and other persons efficiently employed in transacting the business of it, and for the other necessary charges connected with it; leaving to Lord Arden an income derived from this place of not more than 14,000*l.* a year. Now is it to be believed that this state of the case should not have been known to Sir Francis? Why, then, did he not represent it truly? Is it not then a misrepresentation, to say the least of it, to make the income derived by Lord Arden from his office, 38,500*l.* a year, when it stands recorded on evidence the most satisfactory, on evidence which Sir Francis cannot dispute, on evidence with which he himself ought to have been acquainted, that it amounted only to 14,000?

The question, at present, is not whether 14,000*l.* a year be not too much for Lord Arden to enjoy for doing little or nothing, but whether Sir Francis is a man to whose statements implicit credit ought to be given; and whether, in this very statement, exaggeration and inflammation have not been more consulted than truth.

"But 14,000*l.* a year! Why did not Parliament at once put an end to this abuse?" Parliament has done what it could justly and reasonably be expected to do. It has taken measures for the reform of this office, as soon as the existing interest in it, namely, that of Lord Arden shall terminate. Sir Francis, however, gives Parliament no credit for this. He would have had an immediate abolition of the place and its profits. But would this have been honest, as between Lord Arden and the public? Would it not have been the exercise of power against right? Suppose, that in private life,

a man makes an improvident bargain, is he at liberty to plead the advantage gained by the other party in bar of the fulfilment of his engagement? When Mr. Palmer, the institutor of mail coaches, was promised an annual per centage for life, on the improved revenue of the Post-office, would it have been fair, supposing him to have faithfully performed his part of the contract, to have made the largeness of the sum derived from that per centage, a ground for the non-performance of the engagement? The same principle, we apprehend, must govern every similar case: however improvident may have been the bargain, common honesty requires it should be fulfilled; nor can we discover any ground on which Lord Arden

can be deprived of his patent office, of Register of the Admiralty, so long as he shall perform his part of the original contract, which would not go to effect the validity of every pecuniary transaction in private life.

We have selected this case of Lord Arden, both as being the first in the long list of charges which Sir Francis Burdett has exhibited against the late *corrupt* Parliament, and as serving very happily to illustrate the morality of the new school, by which *effect* is made of more moment than *truth*, and considerations of convenience, expediency, &c. are made to supersede the plainest principles of justice.

The whole of his advertisement would fairly admit of a similar comment.

ECCLESIASTICAL PREFERMENTS.

Rev. M. Mapletoft, Rector of Easington, Cleveland, Yeddingham V. Yorkshire.

Rev. Thomas Wingfield, Seaton R. Rutlandshire.

Rev. John Tryon, Bulwick R. Northamptonshire, *vice* Wingfield, resigned.

Rev. George Walker, M. A. Osmundeston, *alias* Scole R. Norfolk.

Rev. Richard Corfield, M. A. Pitchford R. Shropshire

Rev. William Pugh, Bottisham V. Cambridgeshire.

Hon. and Rev. Richard Bruce Stopford, M. A. to a Prebendal stall in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, *vice* Hallam, deceased.

Rev. Verne Peter Littlehales, M. A. to a Canonry or Prebend of Durham, founded on the collegiate church of Southwell—

Hon. and Rev. Thomas A. Harris, M. A. to the Prebend of Osbaldwick, in York Cathed.

—Rev. W. W. Childers, M. A. Beford R. York—Rev. Joseph Drury, D. D. to the

Prebend of Dultincot, in Wells Cathedral—all *vice* Dr. Jackson, Bishop of Oxford.

Rev. Henry Barry, M. A. Upton Scudamore R. Wilts, *vice* Owen, deceased; and to Draycott Cerne R. Wilts, *vice* Windsor, resigned.

Rev. Charles Burne, Chaplain to his Majesty's ship Temeraire.

Rev. James Beresford, M. A. Kibworth Beauchamp R. Leicestershire.

Rev. John Josias Conybeare, M. A. of Christ church, Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, *vice* Copleston.

Rev. T. Gaisford, Greek professor in the University of Oxford.

Rev. John Joseph Goodenough, M. A. Head master of Bristol Free Grammar School, *vice* Lea, deceased

Rev. Robert Watkinson, Second Master of the Charter House School.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A CONSTANT READER's Hints on disputed Points, cost us a heavy postage.

PASTOR; O. P.; J. U.; O. G.; the *Sabbath*, a Poem; M——R; CANTAB; B. S; Kεϑιττεν; R. B.; B. B; P.; Q; OBSERVATOR; and PHILATHES; have all been received, and are under consideration

We are much obliged to R. H. S. for his hints, but we cannot help being of opinion, that a good paper loses both in interest and effect by being broken into fragments.

We regret the necessity we are under, of postponing much valuable Religious Intelligence.

MR. SIMON'S Answers to the Remarks made on his Sermons on the Liturgy will appear.